■ SUPER! / E2

Gift suggestions: Books made for browsing for pals whether they read or not

■ NEWS/ A2

It's final: Mark Jimenez arrives tonight

■ NEWS / A2

ConCom ends work, submits Charter proposals to GMA

■ NEWS / A5

RP rules out opening of agri market further at WTO meeting in HK

Greenies list practical tips for eco-friendly holidays

IWASAN ANG KOMERSYALISMO NGAYONG PASKO

By Julie M. Aurelio

MAKE THIS CHRISTMAS a season of joy and less trash.

Wrap gifts in back issues of your favorite newspaper [the INQUIRER,

GREENIES/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

KC 'returns' for opening of grief healing center

By Cynthia D. Balana

A BIG BROWN BUTTERFLY, CANDLES SET ablaze, balloons that bumped with a big bang.

These are some of the surprise symbols that marked yesterday's groundbreaking ceremony for the establishment of the first grief heal-

KC RETURNS/ A9

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Saturday, December 17, 2005 ★★ 10 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 9 P18

website: www.inq7.net

Abat et al. free on bail

DOJ defends cops making fools of themselves

By Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

COMMENTARY

I AM NO ADMIRER OF RETIRED Gen. Fortunato Abat but I do pity him, even if former President Fidel Ramos said Abat had it coming.

The police had all the time in the world to get a warrant of arrest and would probably have gotten it. Abat was not about to jump into a Lear jet for a farming adventure in Mindanao via Hong Kong, London and Singapore.

But the police chose instead to doff their uniforms and stage a "citizen's arrest"—just like in the video made by my freshman students, with the difference that my students were just having a lark while the police were making fools of

DOJ DEFENDS/ A10

Pinoys want chief justice with brains, says survey

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MOST FILIPINOS THINK THAT brains more than heart and character matter most in choosing the successor to Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide Jr., according to a survey report from the Social Weather Stations.

A majority, or 63 percent, of respondents in all areas and all social and economic classes picked "knowledge of the law" as the most essential criterion in picking

PINOYS/ A10

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

GLAD TIDINGS. It's that time of year again when Mass at dawn starting on Friday, Dec. 16, ushers in the nine days to Christmas Day. Though a tradition as old as the galleon trade, dawn Masses continue to be stirring revelations, as though they are upon us for the first time; as though we are hearing the Good News for the first time that Jesus Christ was born in a manger and brought joy to the world.

Hubert loses appeal; Webbs are enraged

By Armand N. Nocum

THE COURT OF APPEALS YESTERDAY dashed the hopes of the families of Hubert Webb and six others accused in the "Vizconde Massacre" when it upheld their conviction after throwing out Webb's alibi that he was out of the country during the killings.

The 10th division of the court said there was "overwhelming evidence" to declare Webb, Antonio "Tony Boy" Lejano, Michael Gatchalian, Hospicio "Pyke" Fernandez, Peter Estrada, Miguel "Ging" Rodriguez and ex-policeman Gerardo Biong guilty of the crime of rape with homicide.

Special Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño, who led the prosecution team, said the decision was "not yet final" and that the defense could still file a motion for reconsideration with the appelate court.

Zuño pointed out that the decision was in effect a Supreme Court ruling because the high court had deputized the appellate court to review the case on its behalf.

The decision angered Webb's father, former Sen. Freddie Webb, who said the justices ignored the testimony of 40 defense witnesses.

"I am mad. I have a lot of rage right now," the former senator said on ANC television.

The 76-page decision penned by Associate Justice Rodrigo Cosico largely affirmed the Jan. 4, 2000 ruling of former Parañaque City Regional Trial Court Judge Amelita Tolentino finding Webb and the others

HUBERT/ A22

Charges filed vs 4 for inciting to sedition

By Luige A. del Puerto and Armand N. Nocum

A HIGH-SPIRITED FORTUNATO Abat walked out of the San Juan Metropolitan Trial Court after posting bail late yesterday afternoon.

Abat and three other leaders of his "revolutionary transition government"—former Budget Secretary Salvador Enriquez, former Ambassador Roy Señeres and lawyer Carlos Serapio—each posted bail of P12,000 and were given their release orders at around 5 p.m.

Earlier yesterday, Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco filed an inciting-to-sedition complaint approved by Assistant Chief State Prosecutor Richard Anthony Fadullon.

The offense carries the punishment of up to 12 years behind bars.

The Department of Justice said Abat et al. were liable under "the dangerous tendency rule, and not the clear and present danger rule generally adopted in the Philippines regarding sedition cases." *(See Bernas commentary on this page.)*

"It is true that they did not commit seditious acts, but they uttered seditious words," Velasco said after filing the case before the court.

Reynaldo Robles, one of the lawyers of Abat et al., said their first legal move would likely be to file a motion for judicial determination of probable cause.

This means asking the court to

ABAT/ A10

3RD ASEAN PARA GAMES
118
PHI
PCSO

MAN WITH THE GOLDEN ARM

Isidro Vildosola of Koronadal, South Cotabato, crosses the finish line in the 1,500-meter run to bag the country's first gold in the Asean Para Games. (Story in Sports, Page A26.) ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Nora seeks rehab to beat drug charge in LA

LOS ANGELES—FILIPINO SUPERSTAR Nora Aunor, who was arrested in Los Angeles in March this year for methamphetamine possession, has asked to enter a drug diversion program to clear the charges, prosecutors said on Thursday [Friday in Manila].

Aunor sought permission from a judge earlier this week to enter the one-year program, which calls for a judge to dismiss the charges if a defendant fulfills certain requirements, which typically includes substance abuse treatment.

"We agreed to allow her to go into drug diversion," Los Angeles County District Attorney's spokesperson Jane Robison said of the Filipino film and pop star, who is charged under her real name, Nora Cabaltera Villamayor.

Aunor was arrested at the Los Angeles International Airport on March 30 after a federal baggage screener found 6.7 grams of methamphetamine in her duffel bag.

She was charged with one count of possessing a controlled substance and freed on $10,000 (P534,500) bond. Though prosecutors, who were initially unaware of her celebrity status, had not opposed her application for the diversion program, she must get permission from a judge.

"There is an eligibility process for drug court," Robison said. "It's up to the judge in drug court to determine if she's eligible."

Aunor was in court on Thursday, accompanied by her attorney and an in-

NORA/ A22

Another December, another funeral wake

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

ANOTHER DECEMBER. ANOTHER wake. Another gathering of opposition leaders.

For a few hours from Thursday night to early morning yesterday and amid another flurry of coup rumors, deposed President Joseph Estrada was reunited with his political allies when he attended the wake of his elder brother Antonio at the Santuario de San Jose in San Juan.

It was at once a scene of grief and joy.

The gathering was reminiscent of the night of Dec. 21, 2004, when the jailed Estrada was also allowed temporary liberty by the Sandiganbayan so he could pay his last respects to his bosom friend Fernando Poe Jr. as the king of Philippine movies lay in state at the Sto. Domingo Church in Quezon City.

Opponents of President Macapagal-Arroyo as well as Estrada relatives and friends were at both wakes.

Estrada's eyes were beaming when he arrived at the San Juan church to view his brother's remains. He had just been to see his 101-year-old mother, Mary, in her

ANOTHER / A6

FORMER President Estrada breaks down during the funeral Mass for his elder brother Antonio Ejercito at the Santuario de San Jose in Greenhills, San Juan, on Friday. JOAN BONDOC

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Southern Luzon and Visayas which may trigger flash floods and landslides along these areas. The rest of Luzon will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

COMPILED BY JAMIE ALARCON, PDI RESEARCH/12/17/05 SOURCE PAGASA

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Second FrontPage

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Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

CONCOM DELIVERS

Now, it's up to GMA, Congress

By Norman Bordadora

THE CONSULTATIVE Commission handpicked by President Macapagal-Arroyo to help draft a new Constitution has approved a set of proposed amendments that include a shift to a parliamentary system after a transition period of five years that would allow the President to finish her six-year term.

The proposals include a controversial transitory provision scrapping the 2007 mid-term elections and extending the terms of office of all elective officials, including members of Congress who would automatically become part of the interim parliament.

Under the commission's proposals, executive and legislative powers would be transferred to a parliament headed by a prime minister by 2010. The presidency would become a ceremonial post elected by parliament.

The commission proposed that after the new Constitution takes effect, a general election for a one-chamber parliament be held in May 2010. It would bar candidates without a college degree and give members five-year terms with no term limits.

"I believe the collective decision of the commission is for the good of the country. I wish to thank all of you for the experience and the privilege of working with you and accomplishing a work. Mission accomplished," said ConCom chair Jose V. Abueva at the end of a marathon vote that lasted until almost midnight on Thursday to beat the Dec. 15 deadline.

Thirty-five of the members voted for the draft amendments, five voted against and one abstained. There were 14 commissioners absent from the voting.

"You gave us a mission almost impossible, but today we proudly report to you, mission accomplished," said Abueva who presented the draft amendments to the President in ceremonies at the Palace yesterday.

The President said she was immediately transmitting the commission's recommendations to Congress, contrary to earlier Palace announcements that the Executive Branch would study the proposals first before turning them over to Congress.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO bows her head shortly before the ceremonial submission of the ConCom report in Malacañang Friday. The President is flanked by House Speaker Jose de Venecia and Consultative Commission Chair Jose Abueva. LYN RILLON

Any changes would have to be adopted either by a constitutional convention with specially elected members, or by members of Congress who would convene a special session to introduce constitutional amendments. These would then be put to the electorate in a plebiscite.

The President, who survived an impeachment vote in Congress in September over allegations of election fraud, hailed the proposals as "a big step toward the repair of our degenerated political system."

Ms Arroyo created the 55-member commission by executive order last August to propose changes to the frequently unmanageable presidential system which is patterned on that of the former colonial power, the United States.

Critics charge that the move is just a ploy to allow the beleaguered President to stay in power. Advocates say the US-style system has stifled growth and led to paralyzing conflicts between the executive and the legislature.

The consultative commission proposed a five-year transition period to May 2010 under which Ms Arroyo, whose term ends in June 2010, would serve as both head of state and head of government, with supervisory powers over an interim prime minister to be elected by an interim parliament.

It called for the scrapping of the May 2007 mid-term elections and for the terms of the current members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, as well as local officials, to be extended.

Both sets of legislators would then become automatic members of the interim parliament.

The commission said the 2007 polls should be scrapped to make way for the drafting of a new Constitution, which would give the economy "a chance to take off."

It also proposed that the President appoint a third of her Cabinet members to the interim parliament, along with 30 other people chosen at large for their expertise in respective fields.

Vice President Noli de Castro would convene the interim parliament and serve out the remainder of his six-year term to June 2010.

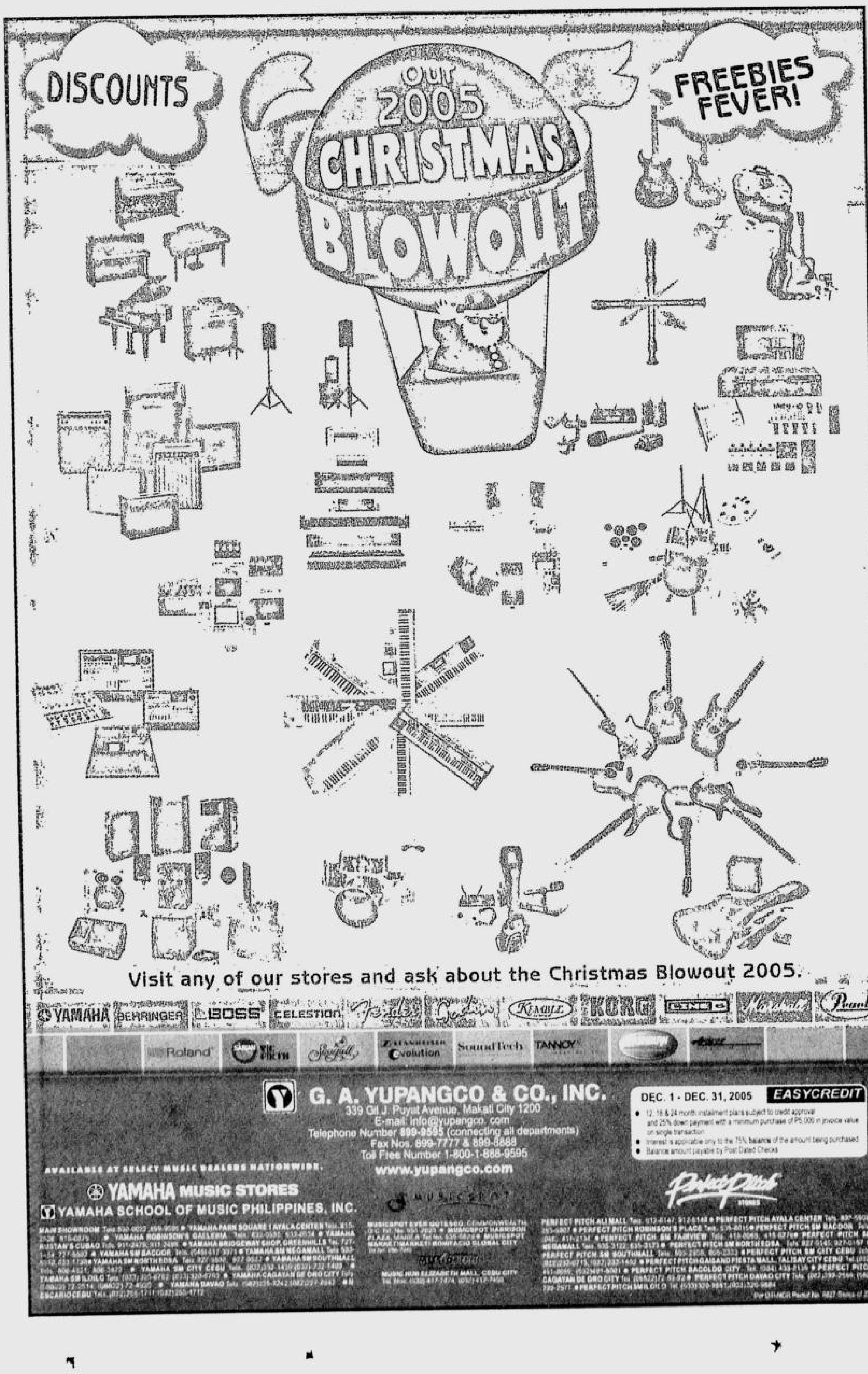
All existing laws would be retained and the courts continue to exercise their jurisdiction.

The consultative commission also proposed that the new Constitution allow foreign ownership in areas previously off limits, particularly in advertising and mass media. It called for foreign entities to be allowed to hold franchises in public utilities.

Explaining the transitory provisions, Romela Bengzon, who chaired the subcommittee on amendments and transtitory provisions, said the commission took into consideration the "realities" that included the fact that Ms Arroyo was an elected President with a mandate until 2010 and that there was an elected Vice President.

"Look at it this way, you have an incumbent President who was voted and has a mandate. You can't clip her powers. At the same time, we want to slide to a parliamentary form so you have to fuse this together, look for a transitional mechanism," she said.

Under the transitory provisions, the President would be slowly devolving her powers because she has to contend with an interim parliament that she cannot dissolve, Bengzon said. *With a report from Christine Avendaño*



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Mark Jimenez arriving tonight

2 lawmakers act as escorts

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

FORMER MANILA CONGRESSman Mark Jimenez is scheduled to arrive at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport late tonight, after serving more than two years in an American prison for tax fraud and illegal election campaign contributions while he was a businessman in the United States.

In a telephone interview from New York, Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay told the INQUIRER yesterday that he and Manila Rep. Joey Hizon were about to leave for Detroit where they were to rendezvous with Jimenez prior to boarding Northwest Flight 71 for Manila. The flight is scheduled to arrive at 10:30 p.m.

"We have not talked to him but maybe tomorrow we will have a chance to see him," Pichay said, adding that the the Philippine Consulate in New York was helping them make arrangements for the reunion with Jimenez.

The two congressmen had flown to the United States specifically to keep Jimenez company on his flight home. Pichay had accompanied Jimenez on at least one leg of the journey when Jimenez was extradited to the United States in December 2002.

Jimenez, whose real name is Mario Crespo, was convicted of tax fraud and illegal campaign contributions to the US Democratic Party by a court in Miami, Florida, and served his 27-month sentence in a federal prison in Pennsylvania. He owned a computer business in the United States before deciding to return to the Philippines in 1998.

National Bureau of Investigation-Interpol Director Ric Diaz said last Wednesday he had been advised by the US Department of Homeland Security that Jimenez would be deported from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, on Dec. 15 and arrive in Manila via Northwest flight 71 late tonight.

A source who used to be close to Jimenez said that, contrary to earlier reports that he would lead a simple quiet life, the former congressman was planning a political comeback.

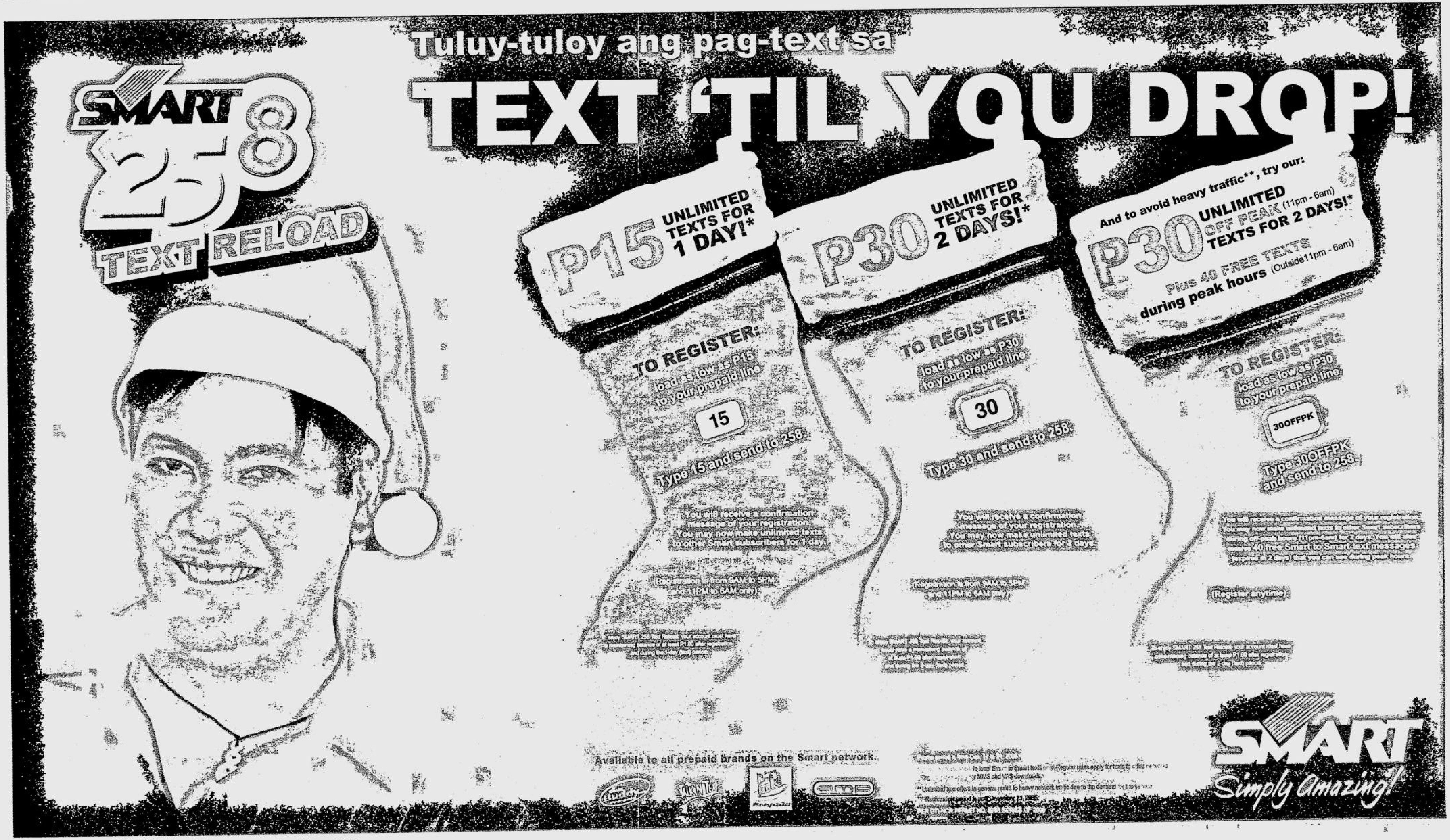
MARK JIMENEZ is scheduled to return tonight and many expect the multimillionaire businessman to stage a political comeback and collect on political debts. PDI FILEPHOTO

The source said Jimenez's staff have prepared Christmas cards for politicians, his political leaders and the media, and was planning to hold a press conference upon his arrival.

Jimenez became close to then President Joseph Estrada, who described him as a "financial genius" and appointed him presidential adviser on Latin American affairs.

Before his extradition, Jimenez accused the Arroyo administration of graft, specifically charging that then Justice Secretary Hernando Perez had extorted $2 million from him in exchange for the approval of a contract with an Argentine power firm. He also claimed giving at least P8 million to a foundation owned by Ms Arroyo and her husband.

Jimenez was supposed to have been deported back to the Philippines last month but his release from jail was reset after he reportedly committed an infraction. *With a report from Nikko Dizon*



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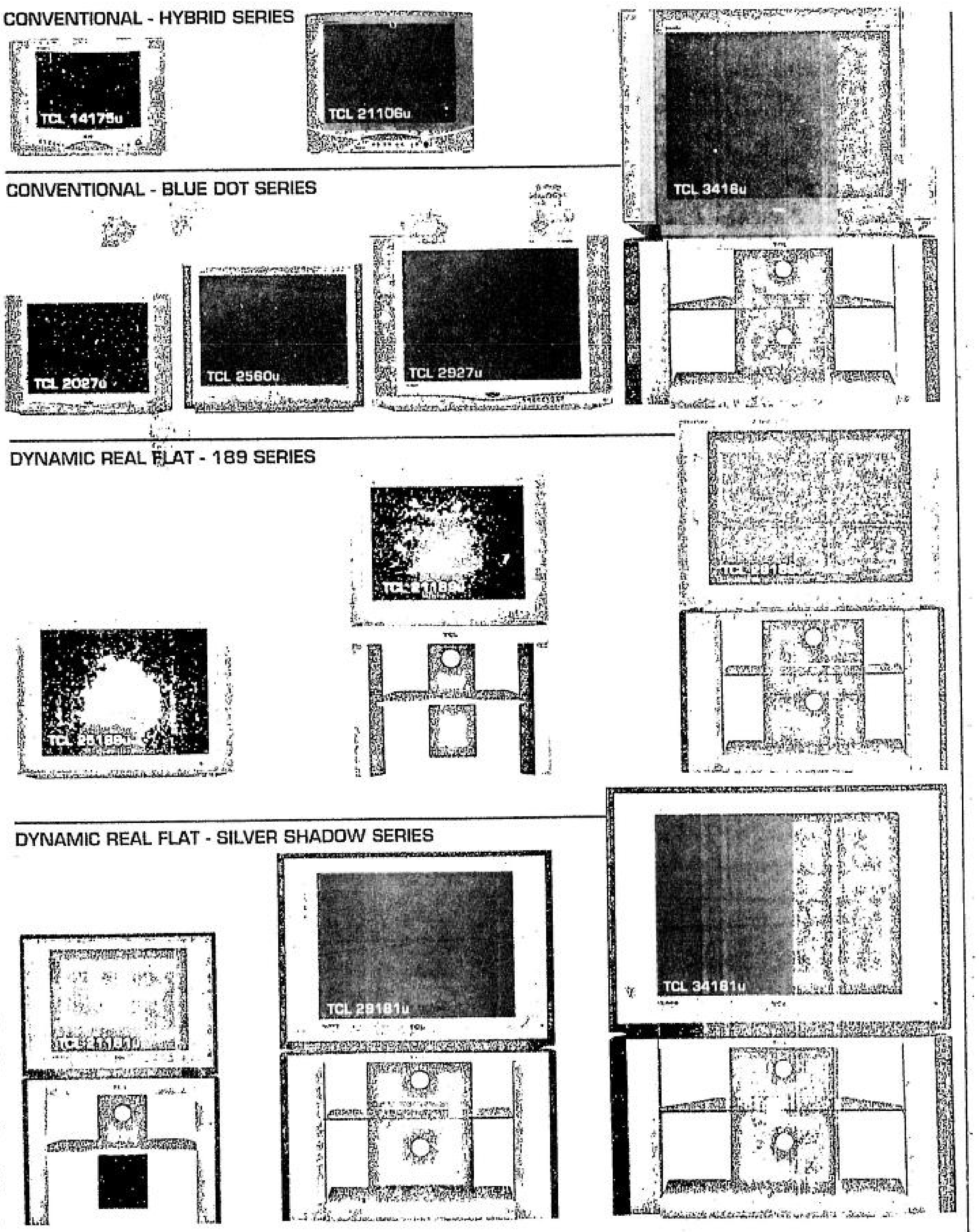
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My New Favourite

RP won't open up aggie market further

By Blanche S. Rivera

HONG KONG—THE PHILIPPINES YESTERDAY ruled out any agreement that would commit the country to further open up its agricultural market, strengthening speculation that the World Trade Organization meeting would end without an agreement on agriculture (AOA) between developed and developing states.

Trade Secretary Peter Favila said such an accord did not seem doable because many WTO members were not willing to adhere to the development objectives of the Doha Development Round.

The Doha round of WTO negotiations aims to lower barriers to trade around the world, with a focus on making trade rules fairer for developing countries. The Doha round began in Doha, Qatar, in November 2001 and negotiations have subsequently continued in Cancun, Mexico; Geneva, Switzerland, and Paris, France. The talks are now ongoing in Hong Kong.

Speaking at the plenary of the WTO sixth ministerial conference here, Favila insisted on the G33 countries' position to secure special products and special safeguard mechanisms for developing economies.

The G33 countries, which actually now has 45 members, led by the Philippines and Indonesia, have gathered substantial support from other developing nations.

"The focus of those who massively distort world agricultural trade through subsidies and protect their markets with high walls of tariffs is even more access to the developing world's market," Favila said.

Undoable

"This, to say the least, is a grossly unbalanced approach. Given the extent of openness that exists today in Philippine agriculture, new commitments on market access per se would be politically undoable; even more so if significant and permanent disciplines on subsidies are not forthcoming," he said.

He said special and differential treatment for developing economies as pushed by the G33 would be integral for negotiations to move forward.

"The pursuit by some of their narrow commercial interests, even if done under the name of their development objectives, cannot be justified if it will be at the expense of the vast majority of developing countries," Favila said.

Yes to tariff reductions

He said the issue of special products and special safeguard mechanisms should be part of any movement or early harvest in the development package in Hong Kong and the DDA.

But Favila said the Philippines was open to further tariff reductions in industries under the Non-Agriculture Market Access (Nama).

PROTEST VS WTO
A Filipino activist raises her fist during a protest rally near the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition center, venue of a World Trade Organization ministerial meeting Friday. EDWIN BACASMAS

PTA incurs losses after predicting profits

By Jerome Aning

TWO MONTHS AFTER CLAIMING THE Philippine Tourism Authority was en route to a profit of more than P1.7 billion this year, PTA general manager Robert Dean Barbers executed an about-face yesterday and announced instead that his agency had incurred losses of over P25 million.

Barbers said that of the 13 tourism facilities PTA operates nationwide, only the Tagaytay Picnic Grove recorded a profit. The rest registered a total of P25,778,700 in losses as of November.

The losses contrasted sharply with the rosy picture Barbers painted last October when he announced early Christmas bonuses totaling P19.5 million for about 1,000 PTA executives and employees.

He said at the time that most of PTA's facilities had turned around, enabling the agency to substantially reduce its subsidies to them and generate enough savings for the bonuses. Thus, on the basis of PTA's performance thus far, Barbers said he expected PTA's profits this year to exceed the P1.7 billion it posted last year.

In disclosing the losses yesterday, Barbers said he expected to reduce them next year by privatizing some of the facilities PTA owns and operates, thus reducing the amount of government subsidies to these establishments. They include hotels, parks, beach resorts and golf courses.

"The considerably reduced subsidy means that the PTA would clearly generate millions in savings that would in turn be appropriated for more tourism infrastructure projects and the creation of more jobs," he said.

Among the PTA-managed properties losing money were the Hilaga Tourism Village in Pampanga (P10.7 million), Boracay Water Sewerage System (P7.9 million) and the Zamboanga Golf Course (P3.8 million).

Jehovah's Witnesses attend convention

THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IS HOLDING its annual district convention for Laguna Circuits 2 & 3 in Victoria, Laguna. The theme of the convention, held Dec. 16 to 18, is "Godly Obedience." It is considered timely since most people today talk about the "role of law" even as disobedience seems to be the order of the day. Witnesses believe that obedience to God's commandments and directions is superior as a way of life.

This year's program focuses on the youth. While statistics show that young people believe in God, the Creator appears to be impersonal to most of them.

The convention is one in a series of more than 68 conventions to be held throughout the Philippines. It is entirely based on the Holy Bible. All seats are free of charge and there is no collection. All are welcome to attend.

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Greenies list practical tips for eco-friendly holidays

From page A1

[it is hoped] or magazine, reuse last year's parol (lantern), and before you throw out the trash—segregate!

These environment-friendly tips will not only save you money, there will be less trash for your garbage collector to haul out in their trucks.

"Metro Manila normally generates 6,000 tons of waste daily," said Manny Calonzo, secretary of the Ecological Waste Coalition of the Philippines (EcoWaste Coalition), quoting figures from the National Solid Waste Management Committee.

The figure gets higher during Christmas.

Tree-hugging greenies or people concerned about the environment can do one of two things: "[They can be] more conscientious about what [they] buy, use and dispose. Or they can [adopt a] culture of compassion, love and solidarity," Calonzo explained in a phone interview.

EcoWaste Coalition chair Eileen Belamide Sison agreed that the Yuletide festivities generated the most volume of trash.

Just do it

"This is why the coalition, together with 16 partner groups, came up with an advisory—a list of practical tips and strategies for an eco-friendly Christmas," Sison told the INQUIRER yesterday in a phone interview.

"This is not an exhaustive list. We simply asked each other about our experiences and what we [in the coalition] practice," she added.

Calonzo said the following tips could be done as an individual or as a community:

- Reuse Christmas decorations. If you must buy, choose items that are made of natural materials, locally produced, energy-efficient and non-toxic.
- Resist the urge to string too many Christmas lights. Bulbs with low wattage save energy.
- Celebrate the holidays with a modest get-together. Donate your savings to a charitable cause. And here's an idea: Why not invite an indigent community to your company party?
- Segregate waste. Recycle non-biodegradable products and compost biodegradable articles. Use cloth napkins instead of paper.
- Donate unused gifts, old clothes, toys, books and household items to charitable institutions.
- Choose gifts which are environmentally-friendly, made from recycled materials or products which advocate sustainable living.
- Use craft paper, old magazines or newspapers (i.e. the comics section), or even an old bandanna to wrap gifts.
- Instead of sending a Christmas card, send an e-card via the Internet.
- Bring a cloth bag, basket or bayong and say no to plastic bags when shopping at the malls.
- Plan your shopping trips so you don't get caught in traffic and save on fuel costs.
- Use non-plastic materials in packaging food for parties. Tell the caterer not to use styro boxes.
- On New Year's Eve, don't light firecrackers or burn tires because the smoke contributes significantly to air pollution.

Lifestyle change

When asked if they expected any resistance to the advisory, Calonzo said: "We should look at the long-term impact of waste on our lives. If we change our mindset and practices, this will favor the environment and protect our health. Being eco-friendly is synonymous to being health-conscious and budget-conscious. We cannot expect everyone to change overnight. But we can start now."

Convened in 2000, the EcoWaste Coalition was initiated by Greenpeace Southeast Asia and the National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

Partner groups include: Archdiocese of Manila Ecology Desk, Bangon Kalikasan Movement, Cavite Green Coalition, Concerned Citizens against Pollution, Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives, Greenpeace Southeast Asia, Health Care without Harm, Institute for the Advancement of Educational and Ecological Alternatives, Kaalagad Katipunang Kristiyano, Maskara, Miriam PEACE, Mother Earth Foundation, Sining Yapak, Soljuspax, Tanggol Kalikasan and Zero Waste Philippines.

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SAME TIME, LAST YEAR: Another wake this year brings together opposition stalwarts and show biz luminaries like Dolphy and Rudy Fernandez at the Santuario de San Jose in San Juan. They are condoling with former President Estrada on the death of his elder brother Antonio. Last year, the death of Fernando Poe Jr. pulled the same mix of people but in much greater numbers.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Another December, another funeral wake

From page A1

house on Kennedy Street and the meeting had given him a lift.

"I am very happy that I finally saw her," Estrada told the INQUIRER. "I am happy that my mother is feeling okay. But she has been going in and out [of the hospital]."

The former President, wearing a light brown jacket over a black polo, had gone straight to his mother after leaving his rest house in Tanay, Rizal, where he is under house arrest on plunder charges.

Susan and Dolphy

Opposition leaders like Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay, former Sen. Francisco Tatad, former Sen. Ernesto Maceda, Rep. Ronnie Zamora and lawyer Alan Paguia were among the mourners. Losing presidential candidate and evangelist Bro. Eddie Villanueva and former Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta also showed up.

FPJ's widow Susan Roces also arrived. So did comedy king Dolphy and Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Alfredo Lim.

Old friend Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, now an Arroyo defender, also came, together with her husband.

Tears for 'kuya'

Estrada broke into tears during the necrological Mass for Antonio, 73, before his elder brother was buried at the San Juan Cemetery. Antonio died Sunday of colon cancer.

Estrada had arrived in a heavily tinted car with his wife Sen. Loi Estrada and a grandchild.

Standing near the coffin, the former President stared for about a minute into the cold face inside it, closing his eyes a few times, while his wife and son, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, looked on.

He later sat on the front row, Enrile to his right, Santiago to his left.

Other guests

Soon, friends started lining up to shake his hands or kiss him on the cheek. "We miss you," some whispered.

The scene began to look almost festive.

"Jueteng" witness Sandra Cam also showed up and talked to Estrada for almost a minute. He put his left arm on her shoulders as they talked.

Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco, Rep. Butz Aquino, film director Gil Portes, actor Niño Mulach, and veteran actress Armida Siguion-Reyna also talked with Estrada.

"I thought this was a fine opportunity to thank (Estrada) for always going out of his way for my husband," Roces said.

A mother's goodbye

FPJ's widow had been at the wake on the first night, and came back at 11 p.m. Thursday when she heard Estrada had arrived.

Estrada was about to leave the wake at 2 a.m. to go back to his mother's house for a rest when Dolphy arrived.

On the way to the cemetery, the funeral convoy yesterday stopped outside the house of Doña Mary more than a km away from the church. The ex-President assisted her when she went down to look at her dead son for the last time.

Braving the cold

Earlier, outside the Greenhills East subdivision, where the church is located, hundreds of Estrada's supporters gathered from early dawn while politicians mingled with Estrada inside a chapel.

The crowd included mothers carrying their babies. In their ordinary clothes and slippers, they slept on the street pavement, enduring the December cold.

"We are here to show our sympathy and support to our real president," People's Movement Against Poverty leader Ronald Lumbao said.

Unlike their previous gatherings, Lumbao's troops carried no political banners, in deference to the occasion.

'Bring him back'

Barangay Corazon de Jesus resident Gina, 27, brought her 11-month-old baby Gabriel.

"We just want to show that we still love President Estrada," Gina said.

Estrada's supporters on Connecticut Street never had a glance at their idol. But his son, San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito, came to see them, shaking hands with almost a thousand people about 1 a.m. yesterday.

"My father is not allowed to meet you but he wants to convey to all of you our gratitude. He has not forgotten all the love you have showed him," Ejercito told the crowd.

The crowd yelled: "*Ibalik si* Erap! *Patalsikin si* Gloria! (Bring back Erap! Kick out Gloria!)"

Trash

The cheers disturbed the quiet of the posh village.

As the night wore on, the once clean street beside the Greenhills Shopping Center became littered with trash and reeked of urine.

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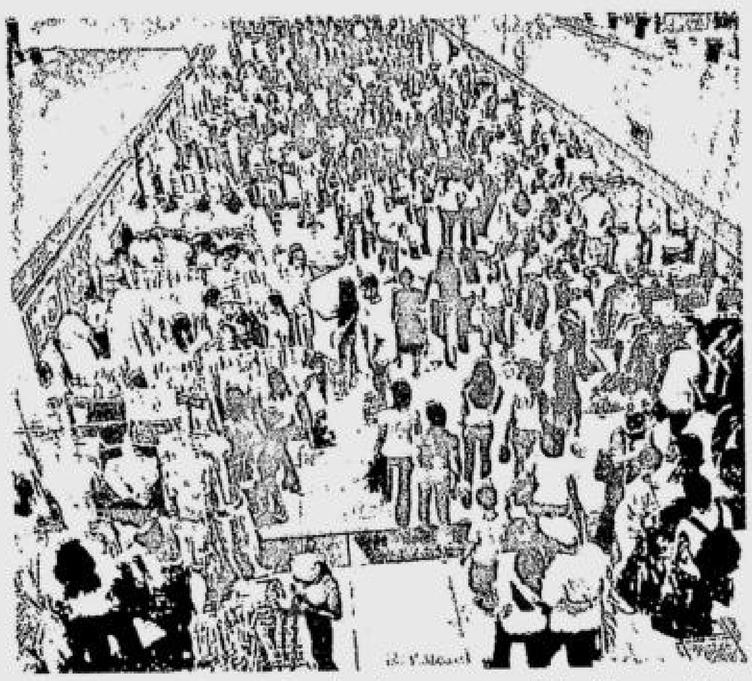
BI agents raid 'tiangges' run by Sino illegals



HUNDREDS of bargain-hunting shoppers crowd the "tiangges" at the 168 mall in Divisoria, Manila. RYAN LIM

By Leila B. Salaverria

ACTING ON COMPLAINTS OF FILIPINO RE-tailers complaining about losing out to "alien" businesses, the Bureau of Immigration has begun a crackdown on illegal foreign vendors at the height of the Christmas shopping frenzy.

The BI swooped down on the Baclaran mall in Parañaque and the 168 mall in Divisoria and arrested more than 160 Chinese nationals engaged in the retail business in separate raids on Wednesday and Thursday.

The two malls are hugely popular among shoppers because they sell a lot of cheap imports whose prices can be brought down lower still through bargaining.

"This should serve as a warning to them for this is just the start of a continuing crackdown to flush out these illegal aliens who openly violate our laws at the expense of our small Filipino retailers," said BI Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. in a statement.

Of those detained, 103 were arrested in Baclaran while 60 were operating in Manila.

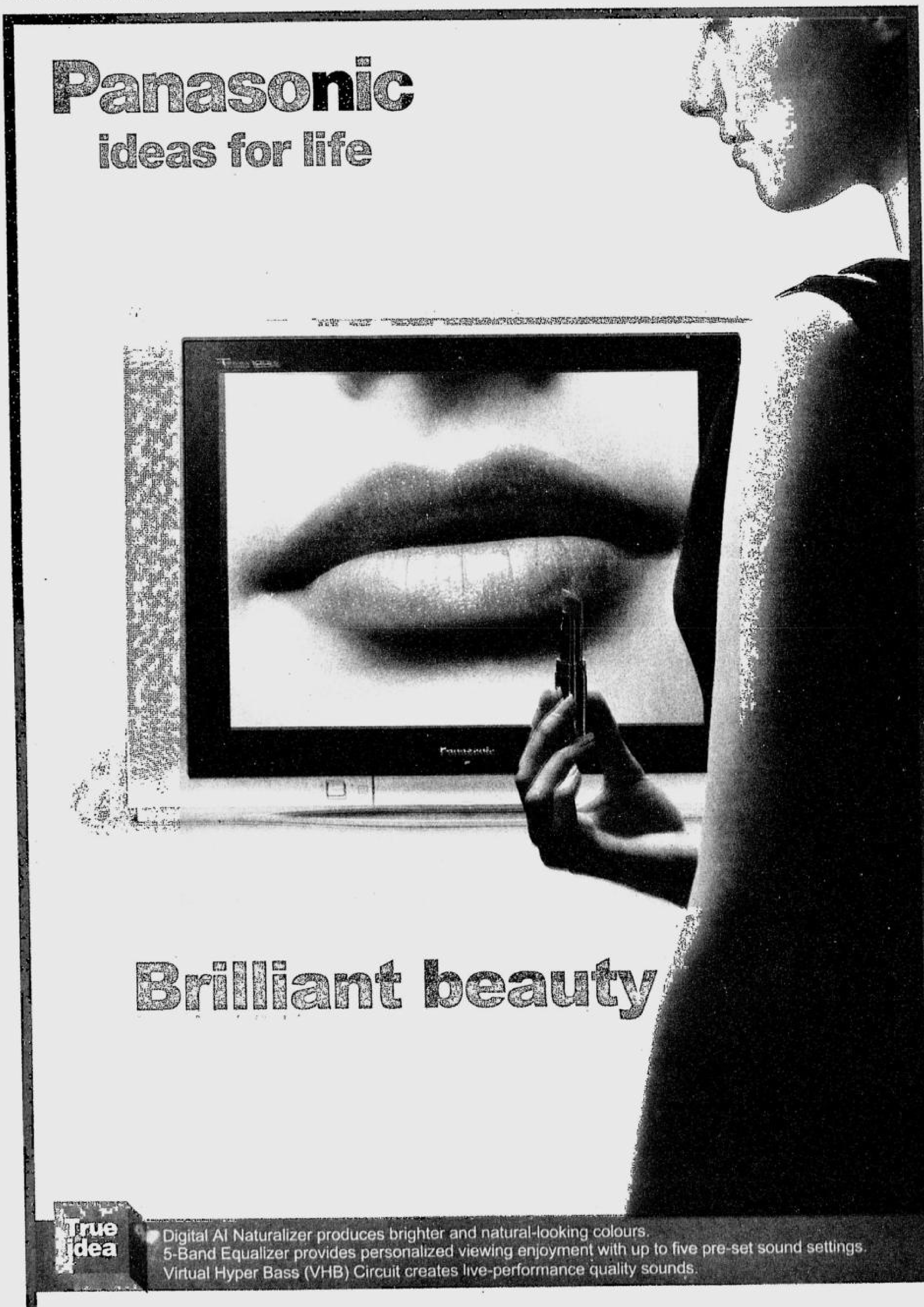
Some of those taken into custody were overstaying tourists. The others had resident visas and had proper documents.

Arvin Santos, who heads the BI task force against illegal foreign vendors, said even those who had documents allowing them to stay in the country were liable for violating immigration laws by engaging in the retail business.

"Except for large retail enterprises or joint ventures that are highly capitalized, the law strictly forbids foreigners from engaging in the retail business as it is exclusively reserved for Filipinos," Santos said.

The arrested foreigners would be charged with "undesirability," while those with expired travel documents would face additional charges for overstaying, he said.

The bureau has initiated deportation proceedings against the foreigners but most of the foreigners were allowed to post bail on humanitarian grounds, Fernandez said.



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JDV wants Garci probe terminated

By Cynthia D. Balana

SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA YESTERDAY asked the five committees investigating the "Hello Garci" wiretapping and electoral fraud scandal to terminate their hearings and submit a collective report for consideration of the entire House of Representatives.

"We are praying that the hearings will come to an end," De Venecia said. "*Sobra na, pagod na pagod na ang tao, at saka naiinis na ang mga tao* (It's too much, the people are very tired and irritated) because nothing substantial has come out of it."

De Venecia made the remarks to reporters at the Department of Social Welfare and Development where he led the groundbreaking ceremony for a grief-healing center for bereaved mothers to commemorate the first death anniversary of his daughter, KC, who perished in a fire at their home in Makati.

He said he was not trying to influence the committee to stop its investigation but was merely making an appeal to enable the country to move forward.

The House investigation, which is in aid of legislation, has bogged down on the question of whether Garcillano, indeed, was out of the country for most of the six months that he was in hiding following the disclosure of the "Hello Garci" tapes.

De Venecia said the House investigation was going nowhere, and it was time to wrap up the hearings and report the findings.

He noted former Elections Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano had repeatedly denied the President's involvement in the alleged election fraud.

"We're just hoping that the five committees will just terminate the hearings and submit the report to the House of Representatives so we can all move on," he said. "We have to approve the budget."

He said Congress also had to legislate reform needed by the country, including amending the Constitution.

But in the House, Makati Rep. Teodoro "Teddyboy" Locsin Jr. said the Department of Foreign Affairs should ask Singapore to present "documentary basis" for its diplomatic note claiming that Garcillano was in the city-state last July.

Locsin, one of the chairs of the House inquiry into the "Hello Garci" tapes, said they would urge the DFA to ask for the documents after the department said it was standing by Singapore's report even though Garcillano's old and new passport showed that he never left the country since November 1996.

He added that the committees would turn over Garcillano's passport to the DFA next week for authentication. The passport was submitted to Congress on Wednesday.

"We will write the DFA to very politely ask Singapore for the basis of its note verbale," Locsin said.

He said the documents could include the arrival and departure cards of Garcillano, who allegedly arrived in Singapore on July 14 on his way to London.

Pangasinan Rep. Amado Espino said the committees would ask the DFA to submit documents about Garcillano's passports and his alleged travels to other countries.

"These include his original application for his passport. We will also ask the DFA to coordinate with government agencies in Malaysia, Singapore and London, and I think even Brazil to see if he also went there," he said.

Philip C. Tubeza

AFP report on Garci misses deadline anew

A MILITARY BOARD INVESTIGATING the alleged complicity of four generals in the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal has again missed the deadline for the submission of its report to Armed Forces Chief Gen. Generoso Senga.

The report is finished but the board's five members still have to to sign it to make it final and official, the board's spokesperson said yesterday.

The AFP Inspector General, Vice Adm. Mateo Mayuga, had said the board would submit its finds on Dec. 15. Before setting that new deadline, Mayuga, who headed the probe, said that the board would submit the results of its fact-finding either late in October or early November.

"In fairness to the secretariat, it has been working doubly hard and it has been working overtime to meet the deadline but there's a lot of data to analyze," Lt. Commodore Earl Pabalan said yesterday.

He said Mayuga has also been busy lately, visiting various Navy units since he assumed the post of Navy Flag Officer in Command last Dec. 8.

The board would try to submit its report before the end of the year, Pabalan said.

The other members of the board are Maj. Gen. Raul Relano, Maj. Gen. Romeo Alamillo, Commodore Emilio Marayag and Col. Caridad Aguilar.

Senga's predecessor, retired Gen. Efren Abu, ordered the probe in the wake of the "Hello Garci" tapes disclosure as a number of officers threatened to go on mass leave or mass resignation unless the generals implicated in the alleged election cheating were investigated.

Four generals—AFP Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko, Army chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Army 1st Infantry Division chief Maj. Gen. Gabriel Habacon and the now-retired Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani—were mentioned in the taped telephone conversations that allegedly took place between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former Elections Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano during the canvassing of elections results last year. *Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

CHEd's lament: Solons lawyering for diploma mills

By Alcuin Papa

THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION (CHEd) said yesterday it would continue to crack down on substandard schools and complained it was being pressured by members of Congress to lift its moratorium on the opening of new schools, particularly nursing schools.

CHEd Chair Dr. Carlito Puno told a news conference the agency had imposed the moratorium in light of the decline in the quality of education in newly opened institutions, especially nursing schools. Besides, he said, there "are already too many schools."

"We are being pressured by congressmen to lift the moratorium," Puno said. He declined to identify any of them but said CHEd "would try very hard to resist the pressure" and continue the crackdown on the so-called diploma mills.

"Come January, we will be running after them again. It's a hard job but someone has to do it," he said.

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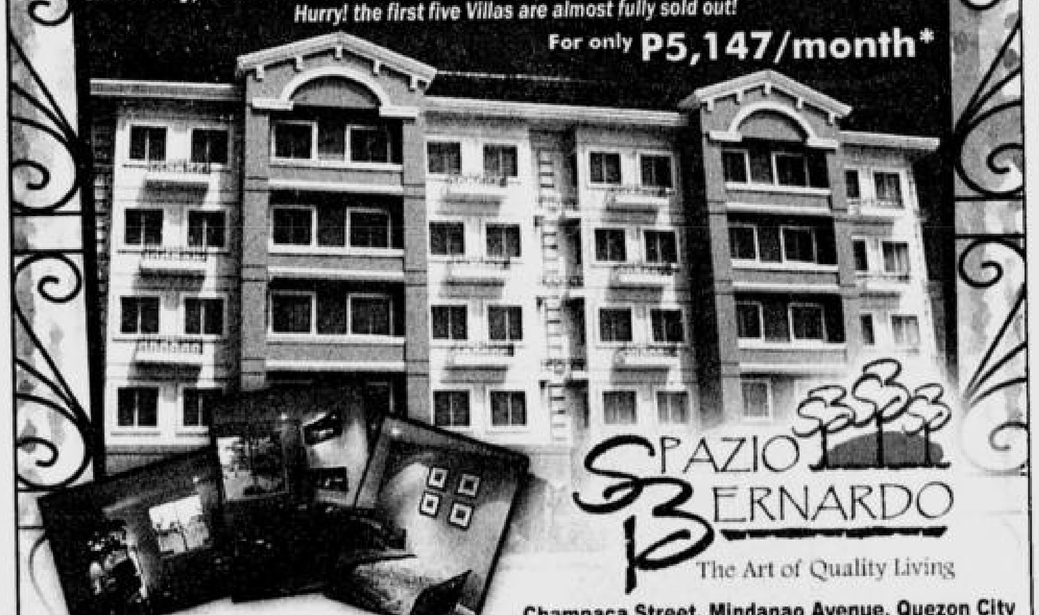

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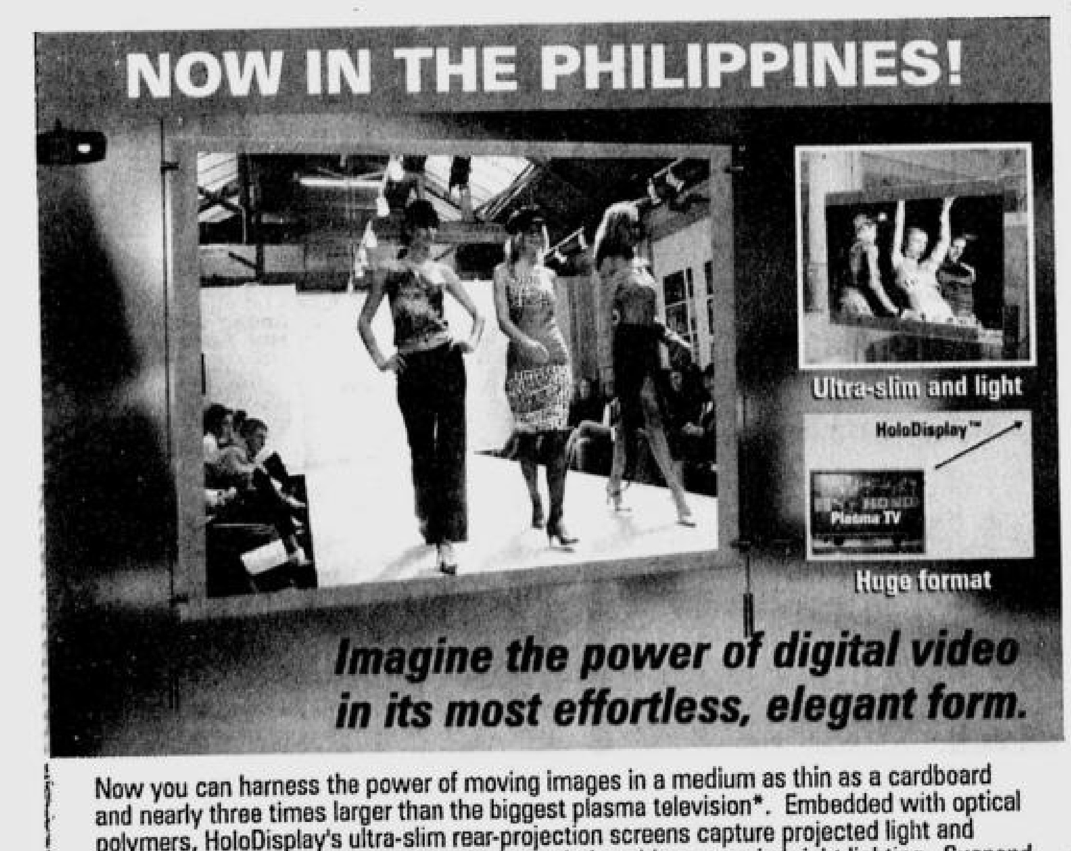

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Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

CIRCULAR NO. 24-P

TO : ALL SSS MEMBERS

SUBJECT : MORATORIUM PROGRAM IN THE PAYMENT OF MEMBER LOANS

Pursuant to Social Security Commission (SSC) Resolution No. 65-s.2005 dated 23 February 2005, which was approved by the President of the Philippines on 12 April 2005, hereunder are the guidelines for the moratorium program on member loans:

WHO ARE QUALIFIED FOR THE MORATORIUM PROGRAM

Members with existing short-term loans (salary, calamity, emergency, educational, study-now-pay-later, vocational/technical, Y2K, stock investment, privatization fund) and direct housing loans (OFW/TUM, Corporate Housing, SSS Employee Housing, SSS-NHA Apartment/Dormitory, SSS Acquired Assets) whose residence or place of work or property location (for housing loans) is located in the following declared calamity areas:

Typhoon "Unding" - Oriental Mindoro; Occidental Mindoro; Coron, Palawan; Libon, Albay

Typhoon " Winnie" - Nueva Viscaya; Bicol Region; Aurora Sub-Province; Nueva Ecija; Bulacan; Oriental Mindoro; Western Samar; Eastern Samar

Typhoon "Yoyong" - La Union; Pangasinan; Apayao; Benguet; Ifugao; Quezon; Isabela; Quirino; Nueva Viscaya; Tuguegarao City, Cagayan; Santiago City, Isabela; Cauayan City, Isabela; Ilagan, Isabela; Solano, Cagayan; Sta. Praxedes, Cagayan

WHAT ARE THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Moratorium period is from 01 December 2004 to 31 May 2005.
2. Deadline for filing of application is on 29 December 2005.
3. Penalties shall not be imposed on unpaid amortizations due during the moratorium period (refers to amortizations for the applicable period November 2004 to April 2005).
4. The term of the loan may be extended up to six months.
5. Any unpaid loan amortization during the moratorium period shall be amortized/paid starting June 2005 up to the end of the extended term of the loan.

For delinquent accounts, the outstanding loan balance as of 30 November 2004 consisting of (a) past due principal, interest and penalty; and (b) remaining amortization of principal shall be restructured over the extended term.

6. A short-term member loan may be renewed upon full payment but not earlier than the original term of the loan.

HOW TO AVAIL OF THE MORATORIUM PROGRAM

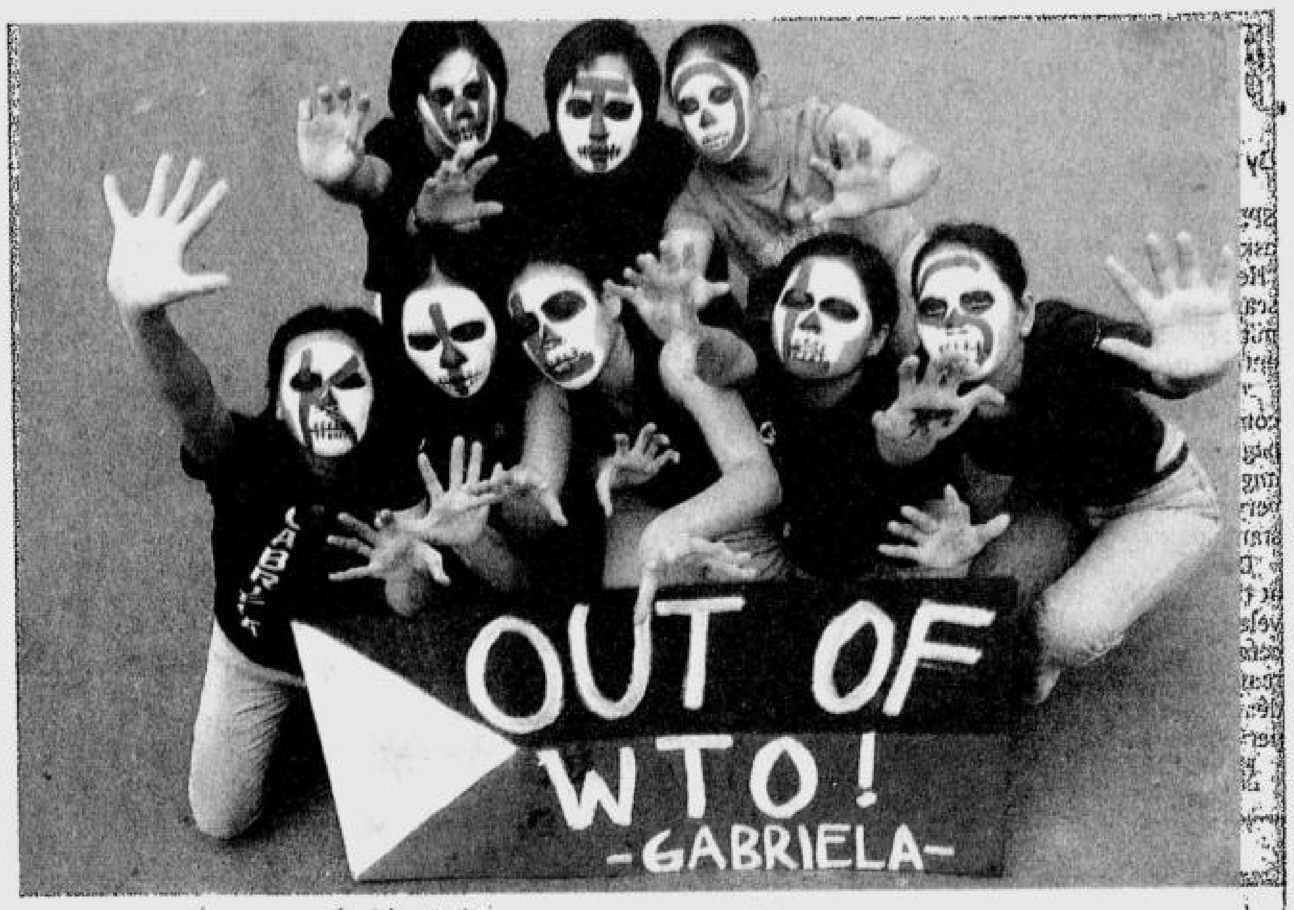
1. Borrower shall accomplish the Application for Moratorium Program which are available at the nearest SSS Office and can be downloaded from the SSS website.
2. Borrower shall submit the application form at the nearest SSS Office with any of the following applicable attachments:
   a) **Employer Certification** - certifying that the member was employed by the company located in the declared calamity area during the calamity period.
   b) **Barangay Certification** - certifying that the member is a resident/owner of property located in the declared calamity area.

Please be guided accordingly.

CORAZON S. DELA PAZ
President and Chief Executive Officer

Address: SSS Main Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632) 920-64-01 ● (632) 920-64-46 to 55
E-mail: member_relations@sss.gov.ph ● Web Site: http://www.sss.gov.ph

"THAT'S MY ANGEL," exults Gina de Venecia at the sight of a big, brown butterfly that settles on the forefinger of President Arroyo during KC de Venecia's first death anniversary. LYN RILLON



WOMEN WEAR THE FACE OF DEATH to symbolize how the World Trade Organization dominated by First World countries meeting, which is meeting in Hong Kong, kills people in developing countries like the Philippines. JOAN BONDOC

KC returns for opening of grief healing center

From page A1

ing center in Southeast Asia which coincided with the first death anniversary of KC de Venecia, the youngest of two children of Speaker Jose de Venecia and wife Gina, who was killed in a fire that gutted their house in Makati City in December last year.

President Macapagal-Arroyo herself witnessed the "signs" indicating that KC was all over the place, and agreed that KC approved of her parents' establishment of the Ina (Inang Naulila Sa Anak) Grief Healing Center, a two-story building which will be constructed in a sprawling 1,000 sq.m. of lot donated by the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

At one point during the Mass, the table with the butterfly-designed candles lit to represent KC and the other dead children of the center's organizers suddenly burst into flames.

'That's KC'

"Oh, that's KC," Gina told her husband, eliciting a nod from Ali Sotto, who also lost her son Miko in an accident two years ago.

At the start of the prayer for the groundbreaking rites, a big bang was heard, caused by the explosion of one of the balloons near the President.

"That's KC again," an amused Sotto said, eliciting a chuckle from the President.

When the people who gathered were told to let go of the hundreds of butterflies, a big brown one landed on the President's right hand and stayed there for the duration of the ceremony which lasted for 30 more minutes.

Butterfly goes to Palace

The delighted Ms Arroyo tried several times to let go of the butterfly to no avail.

"KC is very much with us today," she said, as she showed mediamen the butterfly on her forefinger.

"That's my angel," Gina quipped.

The butterfly did not leave the President's hand she decided to take it with her when she returned to Malacañang.

"That is KC. Oh, what a sight. KC really loved butterflies. She talked to butterflies when she was still alive," a teary-eyed but beaming De Venecia proudly told his friends.

Endless pain

Although they believe that KC is now at peace, both the Speaker and his wife admitted that the pain of losing their only daughter will never go away.

Next week, the couple will leave for the United States to spend Christmas there.

Inspired by Gina's own story of survival, the Ina center hopes to bring together bereaved mothers to share their struggles with one another and to receive professional care free of charge.

Asked about the center's name, Gina said they did not mean to take for granted the grieving fathers.

"In our matriarchal society, the mother is the center of the family. Her state of mind must be stable but grief can derail her plans. That is why it is important to have a support group for mothers," she said.

Architect free of charge

The center was designed by accomplished architect Dan Lichauco, free of charge. Gina said all those who will work in the center will do so without pay.

The center seeks to provide psychosocial support to all bereaved mothers through programs and projects that will enable them to move on. Dr. Honey Carandang will lead the psychotherapists who will provide grief counseling.

To make sure that the center will expand to the rural areas, De Venecia said he secured financial support from sympathetic congressmen who promised to give up a portion of their pork barrel for the center. He also admitted that he had mellowed down a lot as a result of KC's death.

Local governments

Acting Social Welfare Secretary Lualhato Pablo had adopted the Ina Foundation while DSWD Undersecretary Alice Bala was coordinating with local government units to design counseling programs to guide the members of the foundation in fulfilling Ina's vision.

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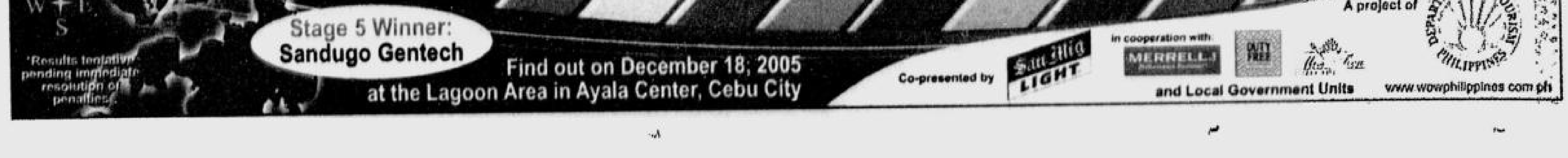
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N W E S

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End of Stage 5 of 9 • Roxas City, Capiz to Iloilo City • December 14

1 Sandugo Gentech
2 Vudu 26:53:20
3 Conquer Nomads 26:53:39
4 D.I.F.-Ingen 27:31:44
5 Four 20 27:34:48
6 USTMC Nomads 27:38:31
7 Philam-Coleman 27:50:07
8 Team Biag/Lagalag 27:57:31
9 Nomads/Bagani 27:58:59
10 Island Souvenirs 28:16:26
11 Zhu-Phala 28:30:53
12 Island Chicken Inasal Boracay 28:35:41

Stage 5 Winner: Sandugo Gentech

*Results tentative pending immediate resolution of penalties.

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"IT FEELS GOOD TO BE FREE," says Abat after posting bail at the Metropolitan Trial Court in San Juan. He says he was always free but was only "sort of detained." His fellow "conspirators" (from left) are Roy Señeres, Salvador Enriquez and Charlie Serapio.

JOAN BONDOC

Abat et al. free on bail

From page A1

review the case and decide whether there is sufficient evidence to pursue it, Robles said.

They may also ask for a preliminary investigation, he said, adding:

"[But] it will be the same prosecutors to resolve it, and we don't expect them to reverse their decision. Even if we appeal to [Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez], we don't expect him to decide otherwise. It was he, after all, who ordered the [filing of the case]."

'It feels good'

At 3 p.m., the police, acting on the DOJ resolution, formally charged Abat et al. with inciting to sedition.

After a brief meeting with Judge Elvira Panganiban, their lawyers agreed to let the police take them back to Camp Crame, where they spent Thursday night, so they could be "physically released" from police custody.

"It feels good," Abat told the INQUIRER when asked what he thought of being "free" again.

"Actually, we have always been free; they just sort of detained us there (Camp Crame)," he said.

The retired general recalled the time when, as defense secretary of the Ramos administration, he signed the recommendation for the release of the members of the Reform the Armed Forces Movement and other soldiers who had rebelled against the Aquino administration.

Laughing heartily at the irony that he was the one now being freed, he said of his release order: "This is my amnesty."

Abat's colleagues refused to discuss what would happen to the self-styled presidency that he proclaimed on Monday at the Club Filipino in San Juan.

Señeres said that from Camp Crame, he would go "straight home" to rest.

But he was obviously bitter at Gonzalez, and declared he would file appropriate charges against the latter at the Office of the Ombudsman.

'VIP treatment'

While they vehemently protested their arrest, the four men were one in saying that the police had treated them well.

Abat said he had no complaint about their accommodations.

"Yes, they treated me well, of course. This is General Abat," he said.

He also said he held no grudge against the officers who detained him and his colleagues: "They were just doing their job, and they were good [to me]."

Abat et al. spent the night at the Philippine National Police General Hospital after their arrest at noon on Thursday.

When they were first brought to Camp Crame, they were served Japanese food for lunch, according to Senior Supt. Asher Dolina, head of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group-National Capital Region.

They were served fast food for dinner on Thursday, and bread and coffee and a variety of Filipino dishes for yesterday's breakfast and lunch, respectively.

One of the arresting officers said Abat et al. were given "VIP treatment."

He said the police made sure that Abat was not harmed in any way. Just to be sure, the officers brought no guns inside the Club Filipino.

"That was a strict order. His and the others' safety was paramount," said the officer who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"Abat is a very charming man. He even patted [one of us] while he was being arrested," the officer said.

Words as basis

The DOJ said the words said by Abat et al. were the basis for the filing of the charge of inciting to sedition against them.

"Under the dangerous tendency rule, there is inciting to sedition when the words uttered or published could easily produce dissatisfaction among the people and a state of feeling in them incompatible with a disposition to remain loyal to the government and obedient to the laws," the DOJ said.

It cited legal jurisprudence stating that "if the words used tend to create a danger of public uprising, then those words could properly be subject of a penal clause."

Thus, it said, the complaint for violation of Article 142 of the Revised Penal Code was "meritorious."

The DOJ said the bulk of the evidence against Abat et al. were the remarks they made during their Dec. 14 and 15 press briefings at the Club Filipino, and the messages on the streamers out up there.

"The words uttered by the respondents as well as the messages stated on their streamers undeniably tended to disturb or obstruct the government in executing its functions," the DOJ said.

'Laughable' case

Abat counsel Robles described the DOJ's case as "laughable."

He said the supposed "seditious" statements made by Abat and company were "regularly uttered [by protesters] on Mendiola and even by the Hyatt 10."

"And they are not being charged. We are wondering why the same utterances are now made the subject of [a case] filed in court," Robles said, referring to 10 key government officials who resigned their posts in July and called upon President Macapagal-Arroyo to step down as well.

But CIDG-NCR head Dolina countered that the anti-Arroyo protest actions never had someone proclaiming himself "president" or people declaring the establishment of any "new government."

"In this case, they had banners and posters saying, for example, that there now existed 'a seat of the new government,'" he said.

Dolina said the police would try to establish the identities of those who were with Abat during his stay at the Club Filipino and who openly supported his "transition government."

He said they would also be charged with inciting to sedition, but would not be arrested without warrants, as what had happened to Abat et al.

Proud family stands by Abat

NO MATTER THE RIDICULE he has drawn for declaring himself "president" of a "revolutionary transition government," the family of Fortunato Abat is "mighty proud" of him.

The family has even urged the 80-year-old former commanding general of the Army to continue his crusade against the Arroyo administration.

"Our family stands solidly behind General Abat," the family said in a statement made yesterday to Camp Aguinaldo reporters.

It added: "We are mighty proud of the kind of courage and integrity that he has consistently shown in the face of all risks, in fighting fiercely for what he believes in. We rally him on.

"We're sorry for the people who ridicule and belittle his person.

"Here is one man whose main advocacy is only for what is good, what is right, what is just, all for the country. General Abat is a highly principled man. Whatever they do to him will not deter him at all to pursue his good cause."

Members of Abat's family who are in the active military service are feeling the heat.

His eldest son, Army Col. Victor Abat, the "baron" of the Philippine Military Academy's Class of 1977, was relieved on Monday as deputy commander of the 702nd Infantry Brigade for forwarding antigovernment text messages.

The colonel was recalled to the Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio and put on "floating status."

Abat's son-in-law, Chief Supt. Jaime Caringal, head of the Philippine National Police Civil Security Group, was suspected of being part of a rumored coup plot. He had to publicly deny involvement in any such plot.

Dona Z. Pazzibugan

Joker: Gov't has lost humor

SEN. JOKER ARROYO DEMANDED that Fortunato Abat be released, saying: "Has the government lost its sense of humor? The arrest of General Abat is absurd. He should be released immediately.

"What can General Abat do? A great man in his prime, he is, however, a general without a command."

But Rep. Douglas Cagas (NPC, Davao del Sur) and Rep. Marcelino Libanan (Lakas, Eastern Samar), two of the President's allies in the House, backed the arrest of Abat et al.

Cagas described Abat and his colleagues as "social pests that disturb the Filipino people's Christmas celebration."

"Abat's age is irrelevant to the case and he must be punished for challenging the law of the land," Cagas said.

Full force of the law

According to Libanan, Abat "cannot continue insulting the law as well as our sensibilities."

He said the government had been lenient with Abat for quite some time, to the point of tolerating his inflammatory anti-government statements.

"While we want a free comic side show, the government cannot allow anyone to mock the system [under] its very nose. Abat and company must be subjected to the full force of the law, but the process must be in compliance with proper due process," Libanan said.

With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and Juliet Labog-Javellana

Pinoys want chief justice with brains, says survey

From page A1

the Supreme Court chief justice, said the SWS 4th quarter survey.

Davide will step down when he reaches the mandatory retirement age of 70 on Dec. 20 after serving seven tumultuous years on the bench.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is to make her choice from among three candidates recommended by the Judicial and Bar Council—Associate Justices Reynato S. Puno, Artemio V. Panganiban and Leonardo A. Quisumbing.

It is believed that the race will be a toss-up between Panganiban, who assisted Davide in the oath-taking of Ms Arroyo in the aftermath of the second people power uprising in 2001, and Puno, who wrote the high court decision reaffirming the President's claim to the presidency.

Respondents were asked to pick out of a list of 10 key traits the three that they considered the most important attributes that the leader of the country's highest court should have.

Experience not needed

Only a third of the respondents voted in favor of the next three most desired traits—human rights (37 percent), sensitivity to the needs of the poor (32 percent) and moral character (30 percent).

Experience was only ranked fifth with a 28-percent vote even though the JBC has traditionally given more weight to seniority in choosing the high court's leaders.

The respondents apparently did not consider incorruptibility as a serious requirement for a chief justice.

The bottom five traits based on the survey were: sworn to democracy (23 percent), ability to resist pressure from politicians (22 percent), sincerity in fighting corruption (22 percent), sincerity in fighting crime (13 percent), and ability to cooperate with other branches of government (7 percent).

Davide himself has said that "consistency and political will" were what mattered most in the job of cleaning up the judiciary.

2nd most important trait

With knowledge of the law being the unanimous choice, the survey showed that Filipinos differed sharply in their choice of the second most important trait of a Chief Justice. The National Capital Region and Luzon chose respect for human rights (43 percent and 39 percent, respectively), the Visayas sensitivity to the needs of the poor (36 percent), and Mindanao going for moral character (40 percent).

The poorest classes (D and E) chose respect for human rights as the second most important trait while the middle-to-upper class (ABC) chose moral character.

The survey was conducted from Nov. 27 to Dec. 4 this year with 1,200 respondents nationwide. It had sampling error margins of 3 percent for national percentages and 6 percent for area percentages.

DOJ defends cops making fools of themselves

From page A1

themselves. And their boss, the secretary of justice, defended them, saying it was not an arrest but only an invitation, without a courtesy RSVP.

The comical thing about this is that a police officer does not have to doff his uniform to be able to carry out an allowable warrantless arrest. He does not have to play civilian.

But, having realized the folly of it all, the DOJ is now calling the arrest an invitation—a forcible one at that.

It is getting "curiouser and curiouser."

1951 comedy

When I heard about the police caper, the first thing that came to my mind was the 1951 comedy in Espuelas v. People.

Espuelas was unhappy about the government under President Roxas. In his passion for reform, he had his picture taken, making it appear as though he were hanging lifeless at the end of a piece of rope suspended from the limb of a tree. He was in fact standing on a barrel.

Next he had this picture published together with a letter to his family saying: "Dearest wife and children, bury me five meters deep. Over my grave don't plant a cross or put floral wreaths, for I don't need them. ... If someone asks you why I committed suicide, tell them I did it because I was not pleased with the administration of Roxas. Tell the whole world about this. ... I committed suicide because I am ashamed of our government under Roxas. I cannot hold high my brow to the world with this dirty government. ..."

'Seditious tendency'

Espuelas was convicted of inciting to sedition.

The reason? "There is a seditious tendency in the words used, which could easily produce disaffection among the people and a state of feeling incompatible with a disposition to remain loyal to the government and obedient to the laws."

Justice Tuason dissented, concurred in by Justices Feria and Paras.

Tuason said of Espuelas' caper: "The reaction of the readers could not have been other than that the whole thing was comical if it were not 'tragic.' The general reaction, it is fairly safe to say, was one of regret for a man of eccentric and unbalanced mind, or ridicule and curiosity for a grotesque stunt. The witnesses for the government themselves, some of whom were Constabulary officers stationed at Tagbilaran, stated that upon reading the article and seeing the author's picture they just laughed it off, 'thinking that this fellow must be crazy.'

"That was akin to our own reaction, and there is little or no doubt that it exemplified the general effect upon the minds of other readers of the article."

The Espuelas case, in fact, had a colonial precursor.

In 1922, while discussing political matters with several persons in a public place, Isaac Perez of Sorsogon uttered these words: "Filipinos must use bolos for cutting off Wood's head." A long bolo reaching from Sorsogon to Malacañang.

Perez, who was referring to the then governor general, Leonard Wood, was found guilty of inciting to sedition because there was "a seditious tendency in the words used, which could easily produce disaffection among the people and a state of feeling incompatible with a disposition to remain loyal to the government and obedient to the laws."

Dangerous tendency rule

I unearth these old cases because they embody a constitutional law doctrine on speech already discarded by jurisprudence but still adhered to by government agents up to the highest level.

I am referring to what is called the dangerous tendency rule, a rule handed down to us by colonials disturbed by the restlessness of the natives.

It seems to have incurably infected police officialdom.

The dangerous tendency rule says that speech is punishable if it "creates a dangerous tendency which the state has the right to prevent."

All the rule requires for speech to be punishable is that there be a rational connection between the speech and the evil apprehended even if the evil apprehended is only remotely probable.

The dangerous tendency rule, however, has yielded to the "clear and present danger" test—a standard that serves to emphasize the importance of speech to a free society without sacrificing other freedoms essential to a democracy.

Justice Holmes formulated the rule thus: "The question in every case is whether the words used are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent. It is a question of proximity and degree."

PNP-DOJ mind-set

Our Court has now repeatedly affirmed this as the applicable rule whether in dealing with speech or with public rallies. Unfortunately, it has not found acceptance among the police or in the current Department of Justice.

If you look at the arrest/invitation of Abat in this context, you can see that it is true to form. It conforms with the mindset of the police and of the DOJ.

The logic goes this way: Speech that tends to foment evil is punishable as a crime. Atqui, when flaunted in the face of police officers, it is seen as action in flagrante delicto. Ergo, it can be the subject of a citizen's arrest or a warrantless arrest.

COMMITMENT TO BUSH

GMA appeals to Senate to pass antiterror bill

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO YESTERday appealed to the Senate's sense of patriotism to hasten the approval of the antiterrorism bill which US President George Bush want enacted as soon as possible.

The government wants a statute that specifically outlaws terrorism to meet the challenge posed by Islamic militants, who have conducted deadly bombings and kidnappings.

In a statement, President Arroyo said: "We appeal to the Senate to finish the job as a supreme act of patriotism to save lives from the scourge of evil. The world looks to our leaders in keeping humanity out of harm's way."

House version passed

The President commended the House of Representatives for completing half of her commitment to Bush when it approved on second reading (the third reading is seen as a mere formality next year) the antiterror bill just before Congress went on recess. The House is dominated by Ms Arroyo's allies.

Bush reminded the President of her commitment to pass the anti-terror bill this year during the recent visit of US National Director for Intelligence John Negroponte.

The President, however, did not acknowledge the increasing pressure from Washington in her statement. "Let us affirm our status as a strong global player in this fight, both as a member of the UN Security Council and chair of the APEC counter terrorism task force," the President said.

Specific acts listed

The House bill lists down the specific acts that would be considered as terrorism including attacks against civilians and property, kidnapping, hijacking and cyber attacks. A key feature of the bill is the 72-hour detention period which would allow authorities enough time to pin down the suspect that would hold him in jail longer.

"With enough legal teeth, we can effectively restrain the mobility and strike capability of terror cells here and beyond our shores in cooperation with our allies," the President said.

Members of the opposition-dominated Senate have blocked the bill, charging that it could be used against opposition members who have been waging a six-month campaign to oust Ms Arroyo over allegations that she cheated to win the May 2004 election.

A bill must be passed by both the House and the Senate to become law. The President urged the senators to pass their version of the bill swiftly by next year.

No deterrent

The government has said the absence of an antiterrorism bill has prevented lawmen from holding onto terror suspects.

One key example they cite is Tyrone Santos, a convert to Islam who was arrested in March with a cache of explosives that was allegedly being stockpiled for a truck bomb attack on the US embassy.

Santos posted bail in April and has since gone into hiding.

The Philippines has struggled with bomb attacks and mass kidnappings carried out by local Muslim militants with ties to the Al-Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah networks. *With AFP report*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, December 17, 2005
3rd Week of Advent

1st Reading: Gen 49:2,8-10
Gospel: Matthew 1:1-17

This is the account of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers.

Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah (their mother was Tamar), Perez was the father of Hezron, and Hezron of Aram. Aram was the father of Aminadab, Aminadab of Nahshon, Nahshon of Salmon.

Salmon was the father of Boaz. His mother was Rahab. Boaz was the father of Obed. His mother was Ruth. Obed was the father of Jesse.

Jesse was the father of David, the king. David was the father of Solomon. His mother had been Uriah's wife.

Solomon was the father of Rehoboam. Then came the kings: Abijah, Asaph, Jehoshaphat, Joram, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah.

Josiah was the father of Jechoniah and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

After the deportation to Babylon Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel and Salathiel of Zerubbabel.

Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud, Abiud of Eliakim, and Eliakim of Azor. Azor was the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Akim, and Akim the father of Eliud. Eliud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar of Matthan, and Matthan of Jacob.

Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and from her came Jesus who is called the Christ - the Messiah.

There were then fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, and fourteen generations from David to the deportation to Babylon, and fourteen generations from the deportation to Babylon to the birth of Christ.

Commentary

Today we begin the immediate turn towards the birth of Jesus and so we go back to Jesus' origins-all the way back to Abraham. There are three sets of fourteen generations, hinting at the fullness that he bears in his person and body. And there are strangers to any Jewish genealogy included with his forebears: Tamar, Rehab, Ruth and the woman who had been Uriah's wife. It is unheard of to include women in the list, but the one to come has a human history like any others: sin, murder, unfaithfulness, craftiness and cunning, ingeniousness and passion as well as being outsiders, those who work the law and position for themselves and who bring mystery and the unexpected into his background. This is a man Jesus who is the Christ.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2530. Series of 2005

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

EU solons to start CIA prisons inquiry

STRASBOURG, FRANCE—THE EUROPEAN PARliament decided on Thursday to investigate allegations that the CIA used European states to transport and detain terrorism suspects illegally.

The US Central Intelligence Agency is alleged to be operating secret jails in Romania and Poland and covertly flying prisoners through airports in Italy, Germany and Romania.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has said the United States respects the sovereignty of European countries in its fight against terrorism, but she would not confirm or deny specific reports of CIA secret prisons in Europe.

"The European Parliament is serious and determined about getting at the truth regarding extraordinary renditions through an investigating committee," British Liberal Democrat Baroness Sarah Ludford said.

She said that "if necessary" the assembly would also launch the European Union's sanctions process against member states "which have gravely breached human rights."

Under the EU's ruling treaties, EU states found guilty of serious human rights breaches can lose their voting rights in the bloc's powerful Council of Ministers where governments meet.

Leaders of the political groups in the assembly decided late on Wednesday to set up a temporary committee of inquiry, whose mandate and composition will be decided next month.

Lawmakers approved a resolution expressing concern about the "presumed use of European countries by the CIA for the transportation and illegal detention of prisoners."

The resolution, which also called for an investigation into the allegations, was passed with 359 votes in favor, 127 against and 32 abstentions.

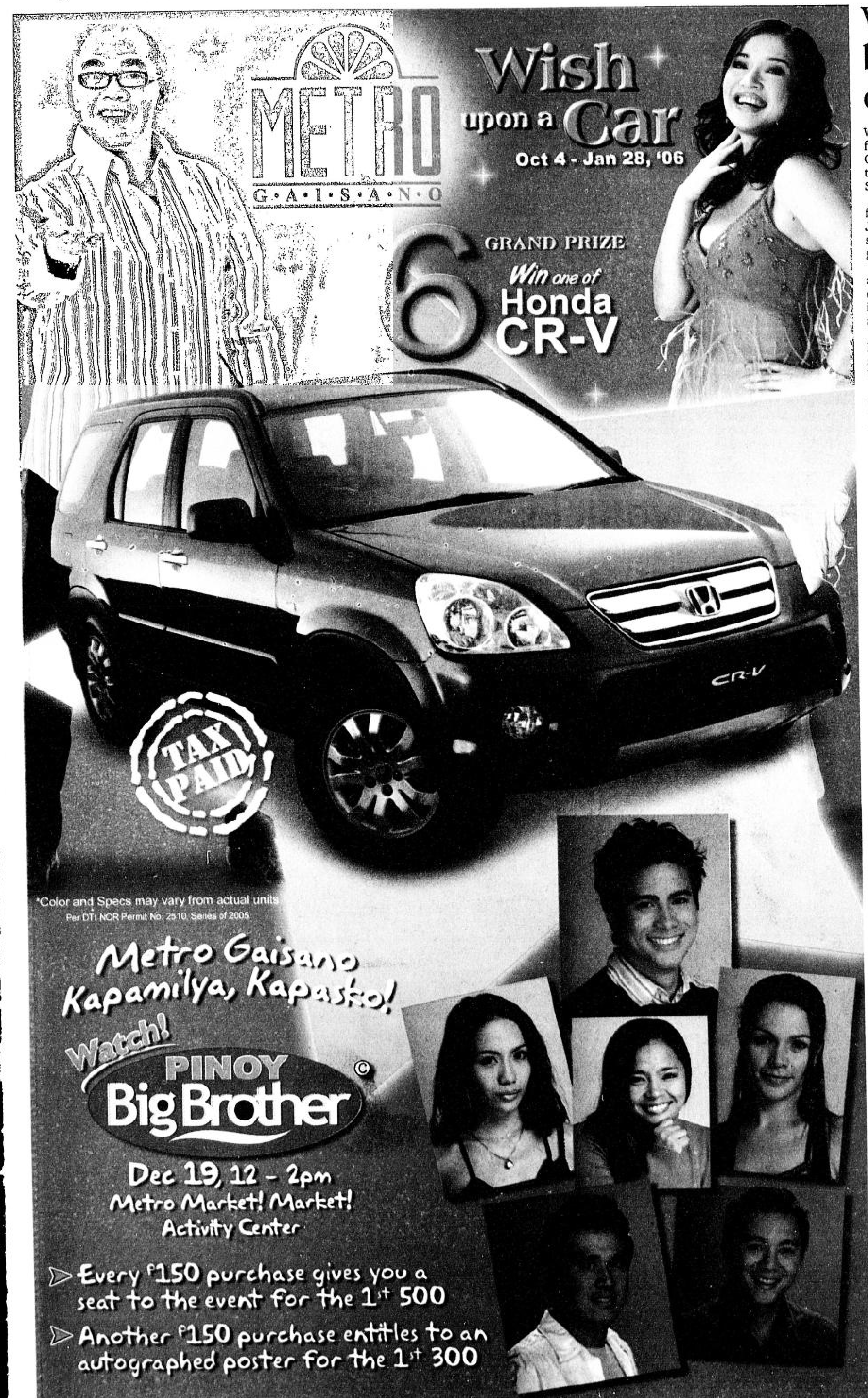
Earlier this week, the top EU justice official urged lawmakers to wait until Europe's top human rights watchdog, the Council of Europe, completed its inquiry early next year before pushing ahead with their own probe.

EU Justice and Security Commissioner Franco Frattini said there was no evidence so far to confirm the allegations, apparently contradicting the Council of Europe's position.

Swiss Sen. Dick Marty, looking into the scandal for the 46-nation Council of Europe, has said that information gathered to date had reinforced the credibility of the allegations.

Frattini said he would fully support the Council of Europe probe by providing satellite images and flight information.

But Ludford said he should be more active in seeking the truth behind EU states' denials of the existence of illegal prisons, and urged him to use his clout with EU governments and officials to help the assembly's investigation, which will have limited powers. *Reuters*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White House backs down over torture ban

WASHINGTON—AMID AN INTERNATIONAL furor over US detention practices, President George W. Bush on Thursday agreed to ban the torture of prisoners held by the United States anywhere in the world.

The White House backed down to a forceful campaign by maverick Republican senator John McCain who led calls for legislation that specifically banned cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment of prisoners.

McCain has won backing from Republican and Democratic lawmakers because of concerns over the US image in the world following reports of secret CIA prisons in Europe and elsewhere.

During a White House appearance with McCain to announce the accord, Bush stressed that there would be "protections" for US forces in the legislation.

He said the White House and McCain have the common aim "to make it clear to the world that this government does not torture and that we adhere to the international convention of torture, whether it be here at home or abroad."

"And so we have worked very closely with the senator and others to achieve that objective, as well as to provide protections for those who are on the front line of fighting the terrorists."

"We've sent a message to the world that the United States is not like the terrorists," McCain said.

"We have no grief for them, but what we are is a nation that upholds values and standards of behavior and treatment of all people, no matter how evil or bad they are. And I think this will help us enormously in winning the war for the hearts and minds of people throughout the world in the 'war on terror'."

The White House had originally threatened to veto the whole defence bill going through Congress if it included the language proposed by McCain. It also sent Vice President Dick Cheney to appeal to Republican senators for backing.

But the Arizona senator, who fought Bush for the Republican presidential nomination in 2000, resisted intense White House pressure during several weeks of talks with national security advisor Stephen Hadley. *AFP*

China reports another human bird flu case

BEIJING—A SIXTH PERSON IN CHINA HAS become infected with the potentially fatal bird flu virus, the Ministry of Health said on Thursday.

The latest victim is a 35-year-old man in Suichuan County of Jiangxi Province, east China, the official Xinhua news agency reported. The World Health Organization (WHO) said it was aware of the case.

"He is apparently in critical condition in hospital," WHO spokesperson Maria Cheng said.

"Our office in Beijing was informed of this today. It is in a province that hasn't identified human cases before but it is somebody who seems to have a history of exposure to poultry," Cheng added from the WHO's Geneva headquarters.

The H5N1 bird flu virus is endemic in poultry in parts of Asia and has killed 71 people in the region out of a total of 138 known human cases since late 2003.

H5N1 remains hard for humans to catch, but there are fears it could mutate into a form that can pass easily from person, sparking an influenza pandemic in which millions could die.

Xinhua said the patient was surnamed Guo and fell ill on Dec. 4, with fever and symptoms of pneumonia. It described him as a peddler.

Earlier on Thursday, the Ministry of Agriculture said a new bird flu case had been confirmed in Guo's village after the death of 1,640 ducks raised by a fellow villager, Xinhua reported.

The provincial veterinarian department suspected H5N1 was the killer and a state avian flu laboratory confirmed the suspicion on Thursday, the ministry said. *Reuters*

S. Korea cloning pioneer accused of faking research

SEOUL—SOUTH KOREAN CLONING pioneer Hwang Woo-suk on Friday denied fabricating key parts of his landmark research and said new tests would validate his production of patient-specific stem cell lines.

Gaunt and unsmiling, Hwang, 52, read a lengthy statement rebutting allegations that he had faked the research before answering questions at a press conference.

Hwang said in the study he had cloned 11 human embryos and cultivated patient-specific stem cell lines from them, a major breakthrough in therapeutic stem cell research.

"What I can say clearly is that we have produced patient-specific stem cells and we have the technology to do so," he told reporters.

Allegations made Thursday by a South Korean colleague that Hwang had faked the findings stunned South Koreans. Other scientists have also questioned Hwang's research including respected US researcher Gerald Schatten of the University of Pittsburgh, a one-time collaborator.

On Thursday Roh Sung-il, a fertility expert who co-authored Hwang's study published by Science, accused his colleague of fabrication.

In media interviews Roh said at least nine out of the 11 stem cell lines never existed.

"Of the 11 stem cell lines, at least nine are faked and the veracity of the two others has yet to be confirmed," he said.

Stem cells are master cells that experts say may one day help fight cancer and other hard-to-treat diseases like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and diabetes.

Though Hwang stood by his research he said that there were "irretrievable mistakes in the photography" that accompanied the research paper.

"I requested that Science magazine retract the research paper after getting consent from other co-authors," he told reporters.

Hwang said that of the 11 original stem cell lines, six had perished due to contamination and five others were frozen but were being thawed and would validate his findings when tested within 10 days.

He added that he would also welcome a probe by prosecutors to determine whether any wrongdoing took place in his research.

Many South Koreans were shaken by the fall from grace of Hwang, a national hero and symbol of the nation's technical prowess.

Ministers were summoned to an emergency Cabinet meeting early Friday to discuss the scandal, while biomedical and pharmaceutical shares took a nosedive along with South Korea's hopes of maintaining a global edge in stem cell research.

"Today is a day of national disgrace," said Lee Wang-jae, a professor at Seoul National University who has been appointed to lead a probe by the university into the cloning expert's research.

Hwang had stunned the world several times in recent years with his groundbreaking work that included cloning of the first human embryo to produce stem cells in 2004.

His breakthrough research on stem cell lines published in June this year was followed by the birth of the first cloned dog, Snuppy, in August.

However, last month Hwang admitted using human eggs donated by junior researchers, violating internationally accepted ethical standards.

The credibility of his work was later challenged by South Korea's MBC network, which said the stem cells did not match donor cells and that photographs illustrating Hwang's research in Science had been faked.

A junior researcher reportedly said Hwang had ordered him to doctor photographs of two stem cell lines so they would appear to show 11 lines. *AFP*

Study: US graduates' literacy falls significantly

THE AVERAGE AMERICAN COLLEGE graduate's literacy in English declined significantly over the past decade, according to results of a nationwide test to be released Friday.

The National Assessment of Adult Literacy, given in 2003 by the Department of Education, is the nation's most important test of how well adult Americans can read.

The test also found steep declines in the English literacy of Hispanics in the United States, and significant increases among blacks and Asians.

When the test was last administered, in 1992, 40 percent of the nation's college graduates scored at the proficient level, meaning that they were able to read lengthy, complex English texts and draw complicated inferences. But on the 2003 test, only 31 percent of the graduates demonstrated those high-level skills. There were 26.4 million college graduates.

The college graduates who in 2003 failed to demonstrate proficiency included 53 percent who scored at the intermediate level and 14 percent who scored at the basic level, meaning they could read and understand short, commonplace prose texts.

Three percent of college graduates in 2003, representing some 800,000 Americans, demonstrated "below basic" literacy, meaning that they could not perform more than the simplest skills, like locating easily identifiable information in short prose.

Grover J. Whitehurst, director of an institute within the Department of Education that helped to oversee the test, said he believed the literacy of college graduates has dropped because a rising number of young Americans in recent years have spent their free time watching television and surfing the Internet.

"We're seeing substantial declines in reading for pleasure, and it's showing up in our levels," he said. The study found that 11 million adults are not literate.

Among blacks and Asians, English literacy increased from 1992 to 2003.

About 29 percent of blacks scored at either the intermediate or proficient levels in 1992, but in 2003, those rose to 33 percent. The percentage of blacks demonstrating "below basic" literacy declined from 30 percent to 24 percent.

Asians scoring at either the intermediate or proficient levels rose from 45 percent in 1992 to 54 percent.

The same period saw big declines in Hispanics' English reading skills. In 1992, 35 percent of Hispanics demonstrated "below basic" English literacy, but by 2003 that segment had swelled to 44 percent. And at the higher-performing end of the literacy scale, the proportion of Hispanics demonstrating intermediate or proficient English skills dropped from 33 percent in 1992 to 27 percent. *New York Times News Service*

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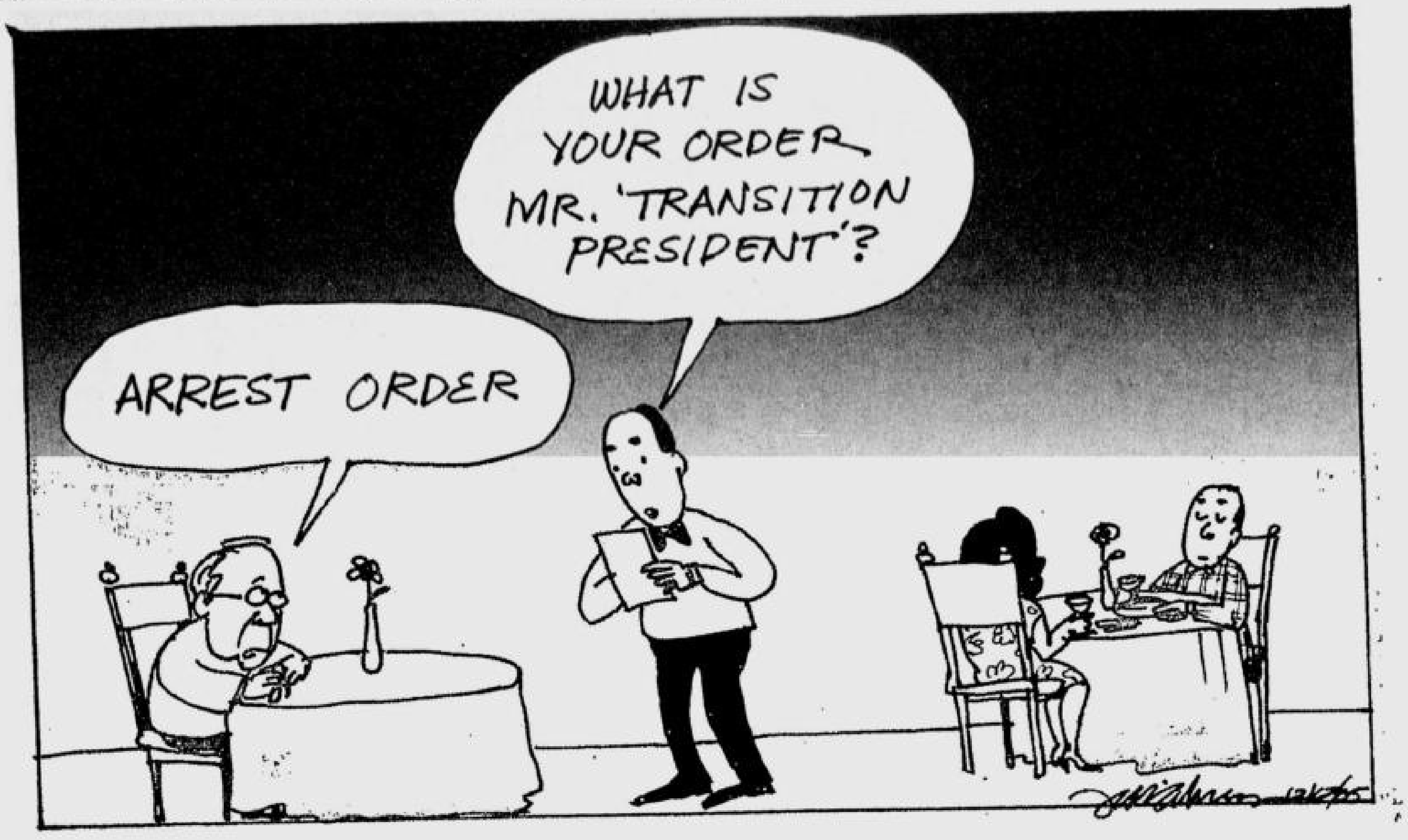
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ARREST ORDER

Fallen stars

EDITORIAL

GENERALSHIP INVOLVES SHOWMANSHIP. EVERY officer with star rank, from Douglas MacArthur with his corn cob pipe to Fidel V. Ramos with his trademark unlit cigar, knows that. In the case of Fortunato Abat, his showmanship came in the form of a fetish for red, white and blue sashes and holing up in country clubs to make grand pronouncements. The other day, Abat went a proclamation too far—and was invited for questioning, then arrested, for his efforts.

Public opinion is divided as to whether the government was too harsh or it did the right thing in clamping down on Abat. This is because Abat is merely the symptom of a larger problem. That problem is the dissatisfaction of the Armed Forces both with itself, and the government and Philippine society at large.

Idealists in the Armed Forces have been frustrated with their own institutions for generations. The father of the modern officer corps, Gen. Vicente Lim, observed before World War II that the "tradition of this army is to help each other, right or wrong, which is a fatal tradition, if it continues for the existence of the country." Since then, generations of officers have tried to save the Armed Forces from itself. The Oakwood mutineer, in a sense, were just the latest in a long line of disgruntled officers wanting to shake things up. And in another sense, the tradition of renegade, idealist officers is represented both by escaped Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon, and retired Gen. Fortunato Abat.

Dissatisfaction with their own institutions inevitably leads officers to question their commanders in chief, the civilian establishment and society as a whole. The results are not only confusing, but lethal, ranging from the frustrated coup that led to the Edsa Revolution, to putschists angrily spraying bullets at a jeering crowd in 1989, or the Oakwood mutineers discovering, to their shame and frustration, that the public was indifferent to their moves. The same combination of wanting to lead the people, and yet discovering that more often than not, the public obstinately refuses to be led, faces military adventurers to this day.

The adventurers are there, fighting, as any strategist will admit, the worst kind of warfare on two fronts. These adventurers must fight a war with their own brethren in the Armed Forces, and with the public, for its acceptance and support. Belonging to the military establishment, and yet daring to think about rebelling against that establishment, not to mention actively working to undertake a rebellion, inevitably leads to romanticizing the notion that lost causes will, one day, bear fruit. So it was for the kamikaze in the closing months of Japan's defeat; so it has been in our Armed Forces for two decades.

The government was obviously of two minds with regard to Abat's (for lack of a better description) persistent, political, kamikaze tactics. The possibility of Abat ever accomplishing a genuine explosion has always been slim. However, doing damage doesn't always require a bomb. It has been bad enough that the government has had to deal with world media attention focused on a retired general armed only with a sash and a speech. Contempt, even from an unarmed soldier, is as wounding as a grenade.

Thus, the government really had no choice but to do something. Ignoring Abat only led to an escalation in his tactics. The headlines were his victory. Defeat, for him, was impossible—even his son became a martyr to filial devotion. On the other hand, the government was wounded by the absurdity of Abat's activities, and the attention he received at the expense of the government.

Another retired general, Jose Almonte, claims that until the dreams of former President Ramos of Charter change is achieved, the country will have to live with the fear of military intervention. But he is being selective in his reasoning. As long as the Armed Forces believes that its professionalism is secondary to the political interests of the commander in chief, military intervention in politics will always be a temptation. So long as the military thinks that its arms give it a decided advantage in any discussion on the nation's future, the fear of coups won't go away. No constitution and no president can change that.

'Simbang Gabi'

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

THE TRADITIONAL SIMBANG GABI BEGAN yesterday, but it is not as traditional as it used to be during the first half of the last century. I remember it with wistful fondness. Simbang Gabi then was more physical and less motorized then that it is today. And it definitely was more romantic to teenagers like me during the late '30s, when we were still in high school.

We had *"barkadas"* then, but we were not so called; we were simply friends, without the rather censurable connotations that the present term suggests. It was the innocent companionship we shared that made Simbang Gabi a pleasurable experience worth recalling in later years. I hope it is also enjoyed by young people today when they go to church in preparation for the midnight Mass on Christmas.

At about four o'clock in the morning, we would wake up and dress hurriedly, complete with warm jackets, to pass for each other on the way to the parish church. Ours was the Nuestra Señora de Loreto near the Bustillos Plaza in Sampaloc, Manila, where we all lived. We grew up in that cherished place until we each moved away, usually when we got married, to other homes, or other countries, and some to other worlds.

Sampaloc then was a sleepy town with nipa houses and acacia trees lining both sides of the idle streets. There were few concrete houses and few telephones for the lower middle class as we know it now. The radio and the automobile were status symbols that did not impress us simple folk. Many of the homeowners tended small flowering gardens on their small lots or had hanging flower pots to decorate their open windows.

I said it was a sleepy town, but not during Simbang Gabi when it awoke to gather its residents in church to pray for the coming of the Infant Jesus. That was the sole and simple purpose of the old women who walked silently with their rosaries and prayer books to take their daily Holy Communion. They probably felt it would make them more blessed to cleanse their souls in the pure light of the dawn, and maybe they were right.

But it was different with us young people for whom prayer was only secondary to romance. Romance was our alarm clock to rouse us at the early hour and drag ourselves from sleep to go to Simbang Gabi. "Drag" is perhaps not the appropriate word, for the truth is that we woke up with alacrity because we were meeting fond friends at break of day. And usually there were one or two couples who were especially fonder than others and walked hand in hand as if they were on the way to heaven and not the church

Our group consisted of my older brother Viling and his fiancée Vining, my two beautiful sisters Ada and Laura with whom, as with my comely cousin Cely, some of our male companions were smitten. Our other siblings, Letty and Junior, our *"bunso,"* did not come along because they were still too young at the time.

My special partner was the lovely Josie, who always took my arm whenever we walked together as if we were sweethearts. I wished we were, but she was my first cousin. We have remained close all these many years and have been communicating regularly since she transferred to the United States a long time ago.

What made Simbang Gabi especially thrilling for us was—we walked. We all walked in the cool fresh air without *calesas* and motor cars to obstruct us. The church was some three kilometers from our house, but we walked because it was more companionable that way. And we didn't get tired. Even the old women walked although I can't say they didn't get tired, which was possible because they were walking with piety on their way to their salvation. Our reason was more practical: we were young and had plenty of energy, and some in our group were in love or thought they were. That is why we all reached the Mass on time, at least after the homily. Many of us stayed outside the church, however, on the pretext that it was too crowded inside.

I have not been to Simbang Gabi for many years now, but I still remember the music that was played during our mellowed time, when electric guitars and other modern musical equipment were unknown. The Mass had to make do with the native banduria and homemade tambourines and the old but still imposing organ resonating solemn tones as if accompanying the singing of the angels. It was a melodious feature of Simbang Gabi that I still enjoy recalling albeit with not a little sadness.

After the Mass came another remembered pleasure that I hope is still available now to the young at heart. It was the *bibingka* and the *kalamay* and the *puto bumbong* plus the hot *tsaa* that tempted the hungry worshiper on the way home in the brightening morning. There was no more welcome breakfast than that bountiful native feast that made the meeting of friends at dawn not only a religious and romantic but also gustatory adventure. It was the end of a perfect Simbang Gabi.

How delightful are the memories of those vanished years that I share with the members of my waning generation. Good morning then to you young friends, and may you make your own unforgettable remembrances again tomorrow in another Simbang Gabi!

A high threshold of shame

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

THE PROOF of the pudding is in the eating. All those assertions that Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez is a person of probity, integrity and competence, all those releases hyping up her role as the "protector of the people" against the excesses of government officials and employees (including, a much publicized visit to children in prison) tell us that she can talk the talk. But can she, will she, walk the walk?

One has to agree with Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. that the litmus test of that will be whether or not she will file criminal charges against Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos and other officials involved in what the Senate blue ribbon committee described as "the flagrantly fraudulent manner" of the implementation of the automated election law (RA 8436).

It was the Supreme Court, in its decision of Jan. 13, 2004 declaring the contract entered into by the Comelec to purchase automated counting machines "void and illegal," that started the ball rolling as far as the Office of the Ombudsman is concerned. The Court directed that a copy of its decision "be furnished the Office of the Ombudsman" which shall determine the criminal liability, if any, of the public officials (and conspiring private individuals, if any) involved.

The Court also made sure that the Office of the Ombudsman could not wash its hands of the case when it dispelled the notion (held by the Comelec's First Division) that election commissioners are exempt from criminal prosecution. The Court pointed out, very reasonably, that lawmakers are not totally exempt from criminal proceedings and, therefore election commissioners cannot pretend to be more special.

But if the Office of the Ombudsman, which Gutierrez now heads, has not washed its hands, it has certainly dragged its feet on the case. Because if one thinks that the blue ribbon committee was slow (it took 16 months for its report to come out), the Office of the Ombudsman has been at it for almost two years now, assuming that the copy of the Court's decision was furnished to it within a reasonable amount of time after it was promulgated. The Court handed down a decision within five months from the filing of the case.

One recalls that prior to the departure of Simeon Marcelo, Gutierrez's predecessor, news reports had already come out to the effect that the investigation was finished and would be released as part of his valedictory. More importantly, it was also reported (from a leaked document) that the recommendation of those in charge of the case was that there was sufficient ground for filing criminal charges against Abalos et al.

Since then, nothing else has been heard. And if Gutierrez doesn't bring out that overdue report soon, or if that report is whitewashed and concludes that there is no basis for criminal charges, there is going to be hell to pay. Gutierrez's name will be mud. And deservedly so.

And if one harbors the slightest shadow of a suspicion that this conclusion is the result of some lynch-mob mentality, or even that Abalos is just a scapegoat or a stand-in for President Macapagal-Arroyo, one must think again. Better still, one should read the Jan. 13, 2004 decision of the Supreme Court as well as the report of the blue ribbon committee (chaired by Joker Arroyo) and approved unanimously by the Senate just five days ago. Both the judicial and the legislative investigations came up with the same conclusion and gave the Comelec and Abalos such a tongue-lashing that any ordinary mortal would have resigned forthwith and slunk off in shame.

But Abalos and his cohorts are not ordinary mortals. They seem to be equipped with Kevlar-like skin that makes them impervious to the most devastating evidence of their shortcomings as public officials, and their sins against the Filipino people. One must read the Court's decision (www.supremecourt.gov.ph) and Committee Report No. 44 contained in the Senate Journal to get a full flavor of the tongue-lashing. But a few examples would not be amiss at this point.

From the Court: "In the present case, the Commission on Elections approved the assailed Resolution and awarded the subject Contract not only in clear violation of law and jurisprudence, but also in reckless disregard of its own bidding rules and procedure... Comelec awarded this billion-peso undertaking with inexplicable haste, without adequately checking and observing mandatory financial, technical and legal requirements.... The illegal, imprudent and hasty actions of the Commission have not only desecrated legal and jurisprudential norms, but have also cast serious doubts upon the poll body's ability and capacity to conduct automated elections. Truly, the pith and soul of democracy—credible, orderly, and peaceful elections—has been put in jeopardy by the illegal and gravely abusive acts of Comelec."

From the blue ribbon committee: "The Comelec's irresponsibility and dereliction of its sworn duty to safeguard the sanctity of the electoral exercise is staggering... The integrity of the Comelec has been irreparably compromised."

But that is like water off a duck's back to the Abalos Comelec. And it is Abalos who now stands between the Filipino people and clean and credible elections.

But maybe, just maybe, if Ombudsman Gutierrez adds the weight of her office to that of the Supreme Court and the Senate, even Abalos' extremely high threshold of shame can be breached. Which is why Gutierrez must walk the walk.

Coping with grief

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

LAST WEDNESDAY EVENING, SPEAKER JOSE de Venecia had to stand up his guest of honor at the Manila Hotel dinner he was hosting, Li Shenxue, the standing member and secretary general of the Jilin provincial committee of the Communist Party of China. Budget Secretary Romulo Neri, Lakas secretary general Joey Rufino (a walking miracle of rejuvenation due to a monthly stem-cell treatment administered by a US-based Filipino doctor—*Mabuhay ka*, Joey!) and Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez had to hold the fort for him.

The Speaker's no-show was for a good reason: he shepherded through that long night the passage of the anti-terrorism bill before Congress adjourned for the Christmas break. It was bruited about that evening that if he were to leave the chamber, a number of lawmakers would disappear (the bill had ran into a quorum problem for days, delaying it considerably).

Yesterday at the groundbreaking of Ina na Naulila sa Anak (INA) Healing Center, a project of his wife Gina, he told this columnist that he was challenged by the media and Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita to play "miracle man" once more and pass that anti-terrorism bill. That night, despite the objections of left-wing groups and questions from the opposition, it squeezed through second reading, with the formality of the third reading in January. To pass the bill, a first was created: to shorten the period of amendment, the congressmen agreed to put down in writing their amendments which will be considered over the holidays, for possible incorporation on third reading.

In the Senate, however, the counterpart bill has not even reached first base.

* * *

Last year, at the start of the Simbang Gabi, the entire nation, led by President Macapagal-Arroyo, commiserated with the De Venecias over the shocking tragedy that befell their youngest daughter KC, who was killed in the fire that gutted their mansion in Makati City on Dec. 16. But time has a way of healing all wounds. Yesterday, Gina de Venecia, together with about two dozen mothers of children who also all died very young, launched the INA Healing Center in a tree-studded corner of the Department of Social Welfare and Development in Quezon City. GMA took time out from hosting South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun to lower the time capsule for the two-story building designed by Danny Lichauco. Then dozens of multi-colored butterflies were released, just like in KC's funeral last year. GMA seemed so much affected by the young girl's death that last Nov. 1, she made a special visit to the Forbes Park crypt to bring flowers for KC, as she knew her parents were not strong enough yet to do so. Yesterday, a yellow and black butterfly landed on GMA's hand and refused to fly away, even as she walked to her car.

* * *

In the past year, as Gina searched for healing of soul with the help of psychiatrist Honey Carandang and various spiritual leaders, she began reaching out to similarly situated mothers. One of the earliest was Ali Sotto, whose son Miko died in an accidental fall. In no time, the circle of "orphaned mothers" widened to include lawyer Lorna Kapunan, who had lost a son, and Menchu Abalos, wife of Rep. Benhur Abalos, whose daughter, Ciara, died of a most unusual disease. A vendor wrote Gina soon after KC's death, telling of her own child's tragedy. She showed up yesterday. Under Gina's aegis, the grieving moms decided to put up the healing center, where other moms could come and seek support and counseling on how to cope with their loss. They agreed to undergo training so that they could act as "grief counselors" especially to the poor and marginalized.

* * *

The Speaker, whose office looks out on the healing center across the road, donated the initial funds from his CDF, and other House members chipped in. The moms would like to eventually set up healing centers in various parts of the country. This was much the same way that the "Haven" for battered women and another for drug-abused children that the Congressional Spouses Foundation have set up branches in various parts of the country, managed by the DSWD.

Lorna Kapunan told the crowd that the usual query is, how come it's only the "grieving mothers" who are cared for and not "grieving fathers"? JDV replied that fathers grieve just as much, except that they are "less demonstrative about their emotions." In his case, perhaps he had no time to grieve, as he was plunged into so many political problems. Yesterday, he admitted publicly that he wishes his wife would help him overcome his grief just as he has sought to help her with her own.

* * *

JDV said he has put up a "burns unit" at the Philippine General Hospital to help victims of fire survive and recover. He also said that funds will be made available to some 36 towns and cities across the country for the purchase of asbestos suits that will enable firemen to survive the heat and smoke as they rescue fire victims. This project was inspired by the fact that he and his son Joey tried several times to rescue KC, but they couldn't stand the heat and smoke. In a later conversation with Louie Locsin, wife of Makati Rep. Teddyboy Locsin, she disclosed that P50 million from the funds of Makati was channeled to the Bureau of Fire Prevention, but obviously asbestos suits weren't available for the firemen's use. I wonder if the bureau now has some.

* * *

At the early Mass to kick off the ceremony, Msgr. Augusto Laban, a longtime friend of the Vera Perez family, gave the grieving moms wise counsel. He said their grief won't ever go away as it's like a deep wound that would eventually heal but would always leave a scar, but that's proof of love. He recalled that when Jesus Christ showed himself to his disciples after his resurrection, he did not show them as proof of his identity his crown of thorns. He showed them the scars on his hands and feet and on his side.

Yawning gaps in reproductive health data

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

HERE'S THE CONCLUSION OF MY REACTION during the launching of the East and Southeast Asian edition of the book "Women of the World: Laws and Policies Affecting their Reproductive Lives," sponsored by EnGendeRights, an organization advocating Filipino women's sexual and reproductive health and rights.

At the launch, Pardiss Kebriaei, legal advisor for international litigation for the Center for Reproductive Rights, one of the book's publishers, mentioned "positive developments" tracked by the book's authors, especially the high level of female literacy, with the Philippines reporting the highest level; effective responses of governments to violence against women; and the linking of violence against women to women's health.

But for every gain that women have made, said Kebriaei, there have been corresponding setbacks. While girls may have access to basic education, there have been routine violations of the rights of adolescents, particularly their right to information and "evidence-based" sex education. What the countries reported on in the book have in common, she added, was the "denial of choice and autonomy" to women despite the governments' commitment expressed in international human rights treaties.

Here's my take on the Philippine situation:

* * *

THE OVERVIEW of the book states: "An important first step in monitoring and addressing human rights violations is gathering reliable data, since a firm grasp of grassroots realities is the very backbone of sound and effective laws and policies. Governments bear the primary responsibility for collecting data, (for) without reliable data, policymakers can neither understand nor address the incidence, causes and consequences of health and social problems."

This then is the prime value of the book, providing data—facts and figures—dispassionately, with little value judgments, that can be used to lay the basis for future laws and policies. This volume provides data not just for the Philippines but also for the other countries in the study—China, Vietnam, Thailand and Malaysia—allowing legislators, policymakers, advocates and activists to compare our national situation with our neighbors who face much the same challenges and, it turns out, have been meeting them more successfully and with stronger political will.

One glaring point of comparison has to do with the maternal mortality rate, the number of women dying due to causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Among the five countries in the book, Malaysia reports the lowest maternal mortality rate of 41 for every 100,000 live births, and the highest MMR is reported by the Philippines, at 200 per 100,000 live births. This means that Filipino women are five times more likely to die from pregnancy or delivery than our Malaysian sisters.

The Overview also mentions that modern contraceptive use among sexually active adolescents in the Philippines is at an "alarming" low level of 4 percent.

* * *

THESE are disturbing data, indeed. The questions confronting us now are: How do we use these points of comparison to advance our advocacy for sexual and reproductive health and rights? Is there need to craft new messages? What issues are being overlooked?

One yawning gap in data collection involves the number and incidence of induced abortion in the Philippines. The current figure being used—approximately 400,000 a year—is based on extrapolation of population data and reports submitted by government hospitals. Are we seeing the real picture regarding abortion in this country? Clearly, the number of induced abortions—whether they result in the woman's hospitalization or not—is much higher than is previously thought. One nagging question to which I have yet to find an answer is the contribution of unsafe abortion to the overall maternal mortality figures.

Another overlooked area is law and policy response to the routine violations of the human rights, especially the reproductive rights, of migrant women workers. The book mentions several instances where laws and policies in the "receiving" countries discriminate against migrant women, many of them Filipinas, such as mandatory pregnancy tests followed by instant deportation, and mandatory testing for HIV. Is our government responding to these violations with the same vigor as it does with, say, contract violations and physical abuse? Are the protection of the reproductive rights of migrant women included in the bilateral agreements that the Philippine government negotiates with receiving countries?

* * *

THERE have been, of course, encouraging developments in the reproductive health field, the most recent of which has been the successful sponsorship of the "Responsible Parenthood and Population Management" bill. While our champions in the legislature deserve all the support and encouragement we can give them, we also need to be aware that a more bruising battle can be expected when the debate on the floor starts early next year.

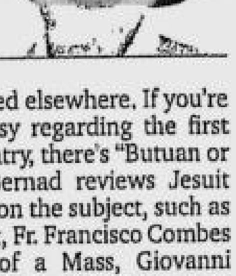
I have a basic problem, for instance, with the name of the bill, which began its trip through the legislative mill as a "Reproductive Health" measure. It's pretty obvious the change in title is the result of a softening in position and advocacy, however strategic it may have been.

Is accommodation the way we want to go, however it may help push forward our cause? Can we not defend our positions and advocacies on the basis of data and real-life situations, rather than on the appeasement of the imaginary fears of the opponents of reproductive rights? These are questions we need to confront as advocates in our work in the future, and I can only hope we find reasonable answers soon.

Must reads

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper



ACCORDING TO DING ROCES, THE PEOPLE AT the De La Salle bookstore informed him that the average number of books sold of an edition they publish is 500. That means that out of 85 or 86 million Filipinos, only a minuscule percentage bother to buy books printed by the De La Salle press. Considering that the school has something like 100,000 students all over the country, it's a pretty dismal figure.

You've heard it said that knowledge is power, so unless you want the Filipino to remain ignorant and uninformed (also misinformed) and therefore powerless, you had better start giving books as gifts. Here are some suggestions that you might want to check out:

Since there are so many lawyers in this country, one of whom might just be a relative, you may want to buy him a copy of Justice Artemio Panganiban's "Judicial Renaissance" for his bedside reading. Besides, Panganiban could be the next chief justice and then that first edition would be a collector's item.

The majority of the chapters are speeches and addresses that Panganiban delivered to different groups. However, some are summaries of comprehensive court judgments such as "The Constitutionality of the Mining Law" or "The Constitutionality of the E-VAT Law." He touches on subjects ranging from mathematics to accounting and even canon law.

Actually, Pangilinan has written nine other books, prompting a fellow justice to describe him as "the most prolific writer of the Court, bar none." But at the same time he has also penned "more than 1,000 decisions and several thousand minute resolutions disposing of controversies."

If you want to know a bit more about Mindanao, and well you should, given the turmoil that's been roiling there all these past years, check out Miguel Bernad, S.J.'s "The Great Island: Studies in the Exploration and Evangelization of Mindanao." The slim volume consists of nine essays that were originally published elsewhere. If you're interested in the controversy regarding the first Mass celebrated in this country, there's "Butuan or Limasawa." Here Father Bernad reviews Jesuit writers and friar chronicles on the subject, such as Fr. Francisco Colin's account, Fr. Francisco Combes who makes no mention of a Mass, Giovanni Careri's "Giro del Mundo," Augustinian Friars Juan de la Concepcion and Martinez de Zuñiga and others. Certainly you will enjoy his footnotes, which contain all kinds of interesting data. Other subjects deal with Father Ducos, "el fraile Capitan" who built defenses in the southern islands against the Muslim raiders, Rizal in Dapitan, the Tamontaca Experiment that recounts the evangelization of the area upon the Jesuit's return in 1859 after their exile of 91 years.

Father Bernad's style is lucid, clear and uncomplicated. There are no mental gymnastics here, no flowery images, only straight history with abundant sources.

For lovers of architecture, UST professor Manuel Noche's much awaited "Lonely Sentinels of the Sea" on Spanish colonial lighthouses is indeed a treat. First, there are gorgeous photographs of the 24 colonial structures, details of their construction, and studies of their towers, their lanterns and the design of their pavilions, doors and windows. There is a rather sad commentary by the professor when he states that of many of them, "all that is left are ruins." He and many others have observed that "the minimal attention given to heritage conservation is truly distressing."

Let's face it, with the destruction of our forests, the dynamite fishing and use of cyanide in our fish beds and coral reefs, and the cavalier attitude toward pollution, is it any wonder that our architectural heritage is fast disappearing? This being the season of joy, forgiveness and good will, I won't dwell on the growing suspicion that when a politician tells you there's no money, it merely means he's not interested in the project.

There are many other books you could consider, depending on the recipient. One of those is Joan Orendain's history of Citibank in the Philippines, and it is not because of the bank but because of her account of commerce in the 19th century and the many photographs, maps and prints of a country that we unfortunately will never see, given the national pastime of demolishing the past and replacing venerable structures with what passes for "modern" architecture" or kitschy take-offs on the *bahay na bato*.

Finally, (there are lots of other books, but space prevents their inclusion here) there's "Anita Magsaysay Ho: In Praise of Women," a tome you can give to "someone who has everything," and if you can afford the cover prize which is hefty. The book designer apparently didn't expect anyone to read the text because its size (13 x 13 x 1.5; 300 pages) and its weight preclude your taking it to bed with you, to the beach or on a trip, seeing as both the weight and size are inconvenient for both traveling and reading. It obviously is meant to decorate your coffee table period, which is a pity because the text by Alfredo Roces is certainly a pleasure to read and Ms Ho's annotations to her works are an invaluable contribution to scholarship and Philippine art history. The over 300 reproductions of her paintings will also prove to be indispensable when proof is needed in the future as to whether a work is genuine or fake.

* * *

Comments at bambiharper@yahoo.com

More than just a candy cane

YOUNG BLOOD

Patricia Ann Sarmiento

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

THE CANDY CANE IS A WELL RECOGNIZED SYMBOL OF Christmas. It is a symbol I prefer not to use, however. One reason is that despite my being a sweet tooth and candy-lover, I do not eat candy canes. They are too hard and big and oftentimes too sweet for me. Another reason—and the more compelling one, I believe—is that if you think of it, the candy cane is not a part of our culture. The candy cane, like other imported symbols, are misrepresentations of the Filipino Christmas.

Candy canes were imported into our culture during the American colonial period. These sweet objects have nothing to do with Christmas to begin with. The white portion of the cane signifies purity; the red stripes, Christ's suffering; and the cane's shape, an inverted J, stands for Jesus.

The Americans allegedly attached all these meanings to the canes so that they would sell. (Note that the Americans were acting true to their capitalist form, producing something for people to spend on and for them to earn a profit from.) The true meaning of Christmas was lost in the commercialism and materialism. The canes helped draw attention to themselves as gifts and away from the central reality of Christ's birth—and we Filipinos fell for them.

The way candy canes have become a symbol of Christmas for us reveals how influential the American culture has become. Creeping into our national consciousness along with the canes are a plethora of other symbols: mistletoe, reindeer, snowmen, stockings on chimney walls and every other thing in the Christmas alphabet. Such "innocent" symbols of joy and cheer are actually insidious signs of how American culture has pervaded ours and how we have become willful slaves to the colonial mentality.

One need not look further than the songs we sing at Christmastime. Like the Filipino carol titled "Sa Paskong Darating." Part of it enumerates what children want to receive on Christmas: "*kendi, at tsokolate, peras, castañas, na marami* (candies, chocolates, pears and chestnuts—lots of them)." When did the idea of apples, pears, chocolates and even chestnuts, enter the minds of Filipinos? In contrast, there is a dearth of songs mentioning *bibingka* and *puto-bumbong*, staples of the Filipino midnight Mass. The fact that these foreign fruits have found their way into the lyrics of Filipino carols proves how pervasive the American influence has become.

What is the effect of this American invasion? It may have weakened our cultural identity. Also, thanks to the colonial mentality it fosters in us, we have become buyers of their products and supporters of their industries at the expense of our own. Worse, we do this naturally and almost unconsciously.

US culture seems to have grown so much roots in ours that sometimes it's hard to distinguish between what is ours and what is not. The Americans succeeded in colonizing us not just physically but mentally as well.

Seeing how we have unknowingly embraced these Christmas symbols that are not part of our culture, one wonders what else we may be missing.

Patricia Ann Sarmiento, 16, is a first year BS Applied Math student at the Ateneo de Manila University.

My old Christmas tree

Anna Liz V. Cabrido

TIME FLIES SO FAST THAT I HARDLY NOTICED MY OLD Christmas tree has now been three years in service. I bought it in the market for only P375. And I remember so well where I got the money I used to buy it, because it came from my first 13th-month pay.

It is not like other expensive Christmas trees with their threadlike leaves and big sizes. Mine is a three-feet olive green plastic pine tree, which I excitedly bring out when November comes. Then I make sure my personalized Christmas tree is filled with the colors of December. In 2003, in its debut at home, the motif was balls and ribbons in red. Last December, it was decorated in the modern concept of a pink Christmas.

Two years ago when I bought my Christmas tree the exchange rate was P49 to a dollar and gasoline was being sold at P27 a liter.

I felt guilty when November turned to December and there was still no sign of Christmas all over our house. No, I had not forgotten the tree and neither did I have a very hectic schedule. The reason is that I have been hit by a financial drought. New Christmas balls and red ribbons are no longer on my list of things to buy. Even Christmas lights to help brighten up the season are a no-no now.

How much is a meter of red ribbon? The big fine ribbon now costs P45 a meter. What about silver balls? A box that has five balls in it costs P75. And Christmas lights? The price of those with 100 light bulbs ranges from P120 to P500. To sum it up, one could spend P500 to P1,000 just to decorate a Christmas tree. And these days, to spend more than P100 on anything other than food seems wasteful and extravagant.

However, I have come to realize that decorating a Christmas tree does not depend on how much you can afford to spend. I just count the blessings I have received with every Christmas ball I put on my tree.

Recently I finished reinventing my Christmas tree. This time, I have decorated it with recycled materials. Instead of buying red and silver balls, I painted a used juice can, which I gathered from a party at the office. I rolled the painted tin cans in P10-worth of silver dust. And now my red Christmas tree is sporting a new look.

An ordinary employee earning a small salary cannot have a very flashy Christmas tree. But no matter how simple it is, it can bring family members closer as they decorate together one of the most loved symbols of the season.

Anna Liz V. Cabrido, 24, is a media practitioner based in Koronadal City.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

Hope from a 'cell phone' story

I HAD THIS RECENT HEARTwarming encounter with the virtue of honesty. It was made more significant because this virtue seems to have become sparser and sparser to find in our land these days.

I was going home from our company's Christmas party last Dec. 6. I took a taxicab marked "Brillante." It was around the midnight hour (so, it was already Dec. 7). When I got to where I lived, I realized my cell phone was no longer with me. I thought it must have fallen out of my pocket just as I was about to alight from the cab. I immediately borrowed the phone of a housemate and dialed the number of my "lost" cell phone. Nobody answered. I rang it up several times more, but there just was nobody to answer. I sent text messages but got no replies either. I thought that was it, for the third time in three consecutive years, I had lost another cell phone. It seemed the experience was getting to be yearly.

To my delight, the next morning, my housemate got a call. It was from the driver of the taxi I rode in, the night before. He introduced himself as Bong Umbas from Tondo, Manila. He explained to me why he could not answer my cell phone the night before. He didn't know how to use it. He had to go home first and ask somebody to teach him how to use it so he could call me.

We agreed to meet and that same day he returned my cell phone. He was a bit old and he looked every bit an ordinary Filipino. He told me he had returned many cell phones in the past. I thought that he must have found other things, not just cell phones, left by his passengers inside his taxi. And he returned them all.

Manong Bong strengthened my belief that many Filipinos still possess the virtue of honesty.

Yes, there are other Manong Bongs in our midst. Yes, Manong Bong belied the hopelessness many Filipinos feel about our "decadent" culture.

For he showed how starkly different the ordinary citizens of this country are from the officials who run the government. If only our government officials, especially the President, were like Manong Bong, there wouldn't be this political crisis that we have now.

—RICHARD LAGGUI,
80-3 Socorro St.,
Maypajo, Caloocan City,
chuck_1130@yahoo.com

Yankee terror through Visiting Forces Agreement

THE REPORTED GANG RAPE OF a 22-year-old Filipina in Subic is only the latest of a string of abuses committed by US military personnel who have come to our country under the auspices of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA). A few years ago, two US Navy servicemen beat black and blue a taxi driver in Cebu City over a fare dispute. There have been other cases of abuses committed by these "visiting" Americans, but no one has been convicted so far.

Ironically, these Yankees came supposedly to train our soldiers on anti-terrorism strategies and tactics. The fight against terrorism is a battle for the hearts and minds of people. The Bush administration ought to learn that, especially in the aftermath of 9/11. But it hasn't. Instead, it trained, armed and let loose a bunch of rogues and maniacs, not to fight terror but to sow it.

The terrorists must be laughing—after all, they have found the most effective recruiters to their cause.

We jumped like chimpanzees when the US bases were removed from our shores. Now we have the VFA, which has virtually made our country a playground for war games as the United States prepares to fight against other countries that are not necessarily our enemies. Like we were when we had the US bases, we are again a rest and recreation sanctuary for US soldiers. And we are so naive and hospitable to the extent of allowing them to rape our women.

Much worse, we have the propensity to defend the criminals instead of the victims. Watch the little brown monkeys defend their big, maniac brothers. A commission chair of the VFA virtually absolved the criminals by saying that we have no right to hold them under our custody as if he were speaking for the US Embassy. A seemingly mentally deranged presidential candidate, who once led a "spike attack" but was never made to pay for his crime, has volunteered to lawyer for the culprits. A doctor who examined the victim even had the gall to say she had it coming.

Under our present justice system, we doubt we can expect even a semblance of justice for this poor, little victim. It is high time we stand up and fight for our women's right, unless we have become so callous and indifferent that we only act when it is our wives and children who become victims themselves. As a last resort, I challenge any group, armed or unarmed, those who profess to defend the poor and the oppressed, to give these Yankee terrorists a hell of a lesson.

—RENE F. ANTIGA,
Northville 2, Bignay,
Valenzuela City

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Half-cocked view

I WRITE THIS AS ONE WHO cherishes the INQUIRER. As an American priest who has lived for almost 40 years in Mindanao, I was thrilled to witness the courageous beginnings of the INQUIRER. A voice of hope in dark days!

But I am saddened to see the silly situation of the INQUIRER in Davao these days. Journalism is not just "what is written." It demands, as importantly, that proper consideration be given to the person written about and to the truth of what is written.

The recent brouhaha regarding Conrado de Quiros and Archbishop Fernando Capalla of Davao makes the INQUIRER look silly indeed. Over the years, Archbishop Capalla has done more for peace in Mindanao and for inter-religious dialogue between Muslims and Christians than all government agencies combined. He is also a very gentle and caring person, a real shepherd. Thus, the indignation in these parts over the cheap shots and snotty columns of De Quiros who is pressing his own political bias, with little or no appreciation at all of the complicated and nuanced stance taken by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines under Capalla's leadership.

Things could and should be righted by the INQUIRER, to save its credibility. The half-cocked opinions of De Quiros have done no harm to the archbishop, but they have done real harm to the INQUIRER. Critical opinions are good, but when they are totally misdirected, they make the newspaper look so silly.

I hope that the INQUIRER is big enough to save the day for its own sake.

—FR. JEREMIAH R. BURR, MM

Dreadful signs of things to come

THE REMOVAL OF THE THREE staunch defenders of the interest of coconut farmers in the United Coconut Planters Bank is a dreadful signal of things to come. For the longest time, the three representatives fought for and upheld the interests and welfare of the coconut farmers.

They did not compromise, in any way, their integrity by entering into any form of compromise agreement with the camp of Eduardo Cojuangco. They tirelessly advocated for the full recovery of the coconut levy funds in order to deliver justice to the more than 20 million coconut farmers, farmworkers and their families. And yet, they were unceremoniously and without notice booted out of their respective posts by the same office that nominated them to the position in the first place.

It is baffling why Camilo Sabio, current chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, has seemingly abandoned the position, held by former PCGG chair Haydee Yorac, on the full recovery of the coconut levy funds. That position led to the appointments of Ka Vic Fabe of Pakisama, Romeo Royandoyan of the Philippine Peasant Institute, and Joey Faustino of the Coconut Industry Reform Movement to the UCPB.

Armed with the confidence of the previous PCGG chair, these men fought for the small coconut farmers. Sadly, the gains won by the coconut farmers through the efforts of these men, have been negated with their removal.

—OSCAR SANTOS,
chair, Coconut Industry Reform
Movement, 84 Masikap Ext.,
Barangay Central, Quezon City

For our children's sake

I COULD ONLY SHRUG WHEN MY 9-year-old daughter asked me, with all innocence, why Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo remains in office despite all the allegations of fraud, cheating and corruption that have been—and are being—hurled against her. We were then watching the evening news on the interview with former Election commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

It was then that I figured that the question of whether GMA cheated or not in the elections is no longer material in resolving the political impasse and the crisis that the nation is experiencing. The fact that questions of this sort keep cropping up, bringing us to where we are now, is enough for a leader, if she cares for the nation as she says, to leave her office. Her resignation will give us a breather, yes, give our nation a rest and allow us to move on.

Otherwise, parents like us will run out of reasons, with which we could explain to our children why such acts and questions continue to hound our daily lives. I do not wish for my children to lose their faith at this early stage of their lives—innocent as they are—in the system and country where they are being raised and which they themselves will eventually lead.

If we simply cast these questions aside now and move on, as the apologists of GMA are suggesting, they will haunt the psyche of our children into the future, definitely affecting them in ways we cannot imagine at this time. God forbid, this might cultivate a sense of hopelessness and apathy on their young minds, which they would carry through their adult life.

So please, President Arroyo, give us a breather; leave your office and let parents, like us, raise our children in an atmosphere more conducive to developing responsible citizens. Do it for our children's sake.

—LITO DAVID,
lydavid79@yahoo.com

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AFP-NPA encounter not in Palo, Leyte

THIS HAS REFERENCE TO THE NEWS STOry titled "3 suspected Reds killed, 2 hurt in new clash." (PDI, 11/27/05) According to the report, on Thursday, Nov. 24, 2005, three days after the Nov. 21 massacre at Barangay San Agustin, Palo, Leyte, Army troops were on patrol in this town when they encountered about 60 New People's Army guerrillas, killing at least three of the rebels and capturing two others.

In an interview made by the local media in our place with Capt. Cromwell Dangapan, he said that such an incident occurred in Baybay, Leyte, and not in Palo.

Our town has always been a very peaceful town all through these years. Our constituents are peace-loving and religious people. We denounce violence of all kinds. This prestigious image of our beloved town has been tainted by the Nov. 21 massacre. The erroneous news report further marred the peaceful image of our town and caused us immense embarrassment.

—DR. TEODORO M. SEVILLA,
mayor, Palo, Leyte

Greater risk to justice

FORMER ELECTION COMMISSIONER VIRgilio Garcillano has turned himself over to the "authorities." The authorities are demanding that the six Americans charged with rape are also turned over to them. What is the track record of the authorities who are responsible for the custody and control of those entrusted to them?

Their request is a proclamation that their knowledge of history ends on a daily basis. I can provide the authorities a list of those who have escaped or walked away from Philippine government custody, based on INQUIRER reports.

I will leave it to them to explain/justify why the six Americans whose attendance is guaranteed by the US government, present a greater risk to justice than those who ignore outstanding orders to appear.

Please note that in the international communications community, a non-response indicates acceptance and approval. Ergo, an international post on my part which reads: "The Philippine government has admitted ...." cannot be refuted.

—MIKE FARRELL,
22 Venus St. Mega Hts.,
Gusa, CDO 9000

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Vice mayor, 2 others killed in ambush

PAGADIAN CITY—UNIDENTIFIED GUNMEN AMbushed a convoy of government officials late night Thursday in Dinas, Zamboanga del Sur, killing a town vice mayor and two others.

Senior Supt. Kharib Muammil, Zamboanga del Sur police chief, yesterday said that Dinas Vice Mayor Mojahed Andi, a police escort and his civilian aide were killed when gunmen fired on a convoy of eight cars led by Dinas Mayor Wilfredo Asoy Sr.

"Two other people were critically wounded, a police escort and a civilian aide," Muammil said.

Muammil said Asoy and Andi's vehicles were trailing each other while other cars in the convoy were left behind when the attack occurred in Sitio Butiti-an in Barangay Sambulawan in Dinas.

He said the convoy slowed down upon reaching the area because of a toppled wooden electric post and a fish car blocking the road.

Muammil said the gunmen toppled the post and used the fish car to block the convoy's path.

Real target

Asoy was unscathed in the ambush.

Muammil said the government officials were on their way home after attending the opening of the provincial athletic meet of the Department of Education in nearby Pitogo town when they were waylaid.

"The police believe that the prime target of the gunmen was Mayor Asoy," Muammil added.

He said investigators are looking at clan war and politics as among the motives.

"We are not discounting all possible angles," Muammil said.

Local officials of Dinas said they were more likely to believe the clan war angle particularly the one involving the Maulana and Lao clans of Dinas.

The clan war started when gunmen linked to former Dinas Vice Mayor Abdulbasit Maulana ambushed and killed Romano Kok Lao, his pregnant live-in partner and four others off the sea of Dinas in February.

Romano's younger brother, Camil alias Commander Ruben of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), retaliated by staging an ambushed that killed Vice Mayor Maulana and five of his security escorts in July.

Bigger war

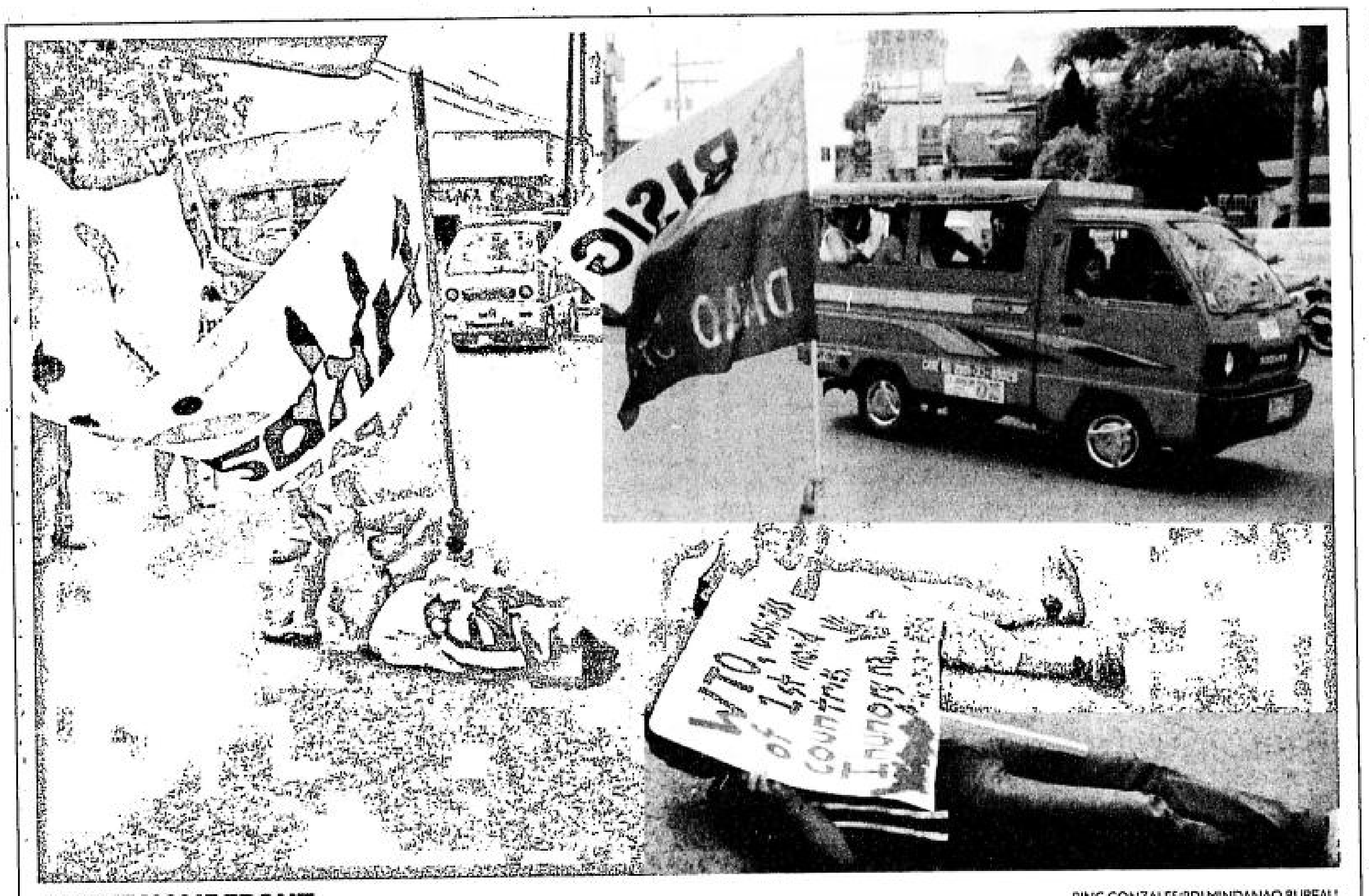
As an offshoot of Maulana's death, a war sparked between the two clans, killing more than 20 individuals in a span of three months.

The latest victim was former Dinas town Councilor Satok Lao, a cousin of Commander Ruben, who ran and lost in the 2004 mayoral race against Asoy.

Satok Lao was attacked by van-riding gunmen early morning of Oct. 26, as he was performing his morning exercise outside his residence in Barangay Supang, also in Dinas.

His death took place two days after an MILF peacekeeping team left Dinas town after failing to settle the dispute between the two warring families.

The MILF peacekeeping team led by Hahlil Salamat, accused the Maulana family of violating a truce when they continued to attack the Lao clan. *Hernan de la Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



AT THE HOME FRONT BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU
Leftists bring their protests against trade liberalization to Davao City, lying on the busy C.M. Recto Street to demand Philippine government withdrawal from World Trade Organization agreements.

Palparan's dream: To return to Eastern Visayas

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—IT HAS BEEN four months since his transfer to Luzon but Major Gen. Jovito Palparan still longs to be reassigned to Eastern Visayas to fulfill some unfinished business.

Palparan said in a radio interview yesterday that he still wanted to fulfill his plan to put an end to insurgency problem in the region, especially the three Samar provinces.

"If given the chance to be (assigned) in the region, I would really love that. Aside from being a native of Eastern Visayas, I would really like to see my target in eliminating its insurgency problem realized which I failed to do during my brief stint there for some reasons," said Palparan over "Bantay Isyu" of Radyo Diwa.

But he said he was happy to know that his successor Major Gen. Bonifacio Ramos, 8th Infantry Division chief, had also given a priority to the anti-insurgency campaign.

"He may have his own way of solving the (insurgency) problem. But at least he is also doing his own share in ending the problem of the region," he said.

Palparan, a native of Southern Leyte, took over as 8th ID chief based in Catbalogan town, Samar last February when he boldly announced he would crush the region's insurgency problem in six months to a year.

Under his command, the military intensified their operations against the New People's Army, which the human rights groups blamed for the massive evacuation of residents in hinterland villages of Samar, harassment and intimidation of militant groups that were not seen since the Martial law years.

At least five militant leaders in the region had been killed and several others were seriously injured by unidentified assailants since March. All the unresolved killings and failed slay attempts were blamed by militant groups on the military.

Militant groups strongly lobbied for Palparan's removal from the region and were supported by Samar Representatives Catalino Figueroa and Reynaldo Uy.

Last August, Palparan was removed from Eastern Visayas and was named commanding officer of the 7th Infantry Division based in Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija.

In the same radio interview, Palparan reiterated his strong denial of allegations that he did not respect human rights and he was responsible for the spate of killings of militant leaders in the region.

"If I am indeed responsible for these killings, I would not be confirmed by the Commission on Appointments," he said.

PARTNERS FOR CLEAN AIR CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn (second from left), also chair of the League of Cities, is assisted by Daniel Moore (left), chief of the Office of Energy and Environment of the USAID, and Thomas Crouch, ADB Philippine country director, in cutting a ceremonial ribbon to mark the start of a conference on Partnering Cities for Clean Air in Puerto Princesa. Also in the ceremony were Baguio City Mayor Braulio Yaranon and Panabo City Mayor Reynaldo Gavino.

5 get death for kidnapping case 6 yrs ago

BACOOR, CAVITE—A CAVITE court yesterday handed down death sentences to five men accused of kidnapping a Filipino-Chinese businesswoman in Carmona, Cavite more than six years ago.

The court, however, exonerated two other accused, including a ranking Philippine Air Force officer believed to be the mastermind of the kidnapping.

In his 131-page decision, Judge Eduardo Israel Tanguanco, executive judge of the Bacoor regional trial court, found Teodulfo Iligan, Manuel Moral, Elde Ayupan, Generoso Magpulong and Lorenzo Cañas guilty beyond reasonable doubt and sentenced them to die.

The court also ordered the five convicted kidnappers to pay the victim Karen Hsieh, 39, P500,000 in moral damages.

Acquitted from the kidnap-for-ransom charges "for insufficiency of evidence" were alleged group leader Major Ismael Orbegoso and Felipe Iligan, Hsieh's employee at their construction company.

The court has ordered the warden of the Cavite provincial jail to immediately release the two from prison.

The group was accused of abducting Hsieh, inside the posh Southwoods Golf and Country Club in Carmona on April 29, 1999.

Not guilty

Records showed the group initially demanded P20 million from the victim's family but subsequently raised the ransom to P200 million.

The Presidential Anti-Crime Task Force rescued the victim three days after she was taken at the group's safe house in Dasmariñas town and after the family paid P1 million to the suspects in a flyover in Quezon City.

According to Hsieh, she was on her way to her office from their house in Paliparan, Dasmariñas on board her white Mitsubishi Galant when a Nissan Sentra blocked their path inside the Southwoods.

She said three armed men alighted from the Sentra and approached her car.

The armed men ordered her and her driver Ernesto Panulayan at gunpoint to open the doors of their car.

One of the suspects then pushed Panulayan to the front passenger seat and commandeered the vehicle.

As the suspects ransacked her bag of her personal belongings, the group brought the victims to a house somewhere in Quezon City.

It was there where a certain Ka Bert met with her and told her that they needed a "donation" worth P20 million.

Communist front

The suspects apparently wanted to make it appear that they were communist rebels.

When Hsieh told her abductors that she did not have that money, the suspects freed Panulayan to inform her boss' husband about the ransom.

The group then took the victim to their hideout in Dasmariñas where she was rescued by PAOCTF agents on May 2, 1999.

In absolving the two, Tanguanco said the charges against Orbegoso and Felipe were simply "specious."

Orbegoso said he was at the V. Luna Hospital in Quezon City when Hsieh was kidnapped.

Felipe, on the other hand, said he even reported for work at the company owned by the victim when the abduction took place.

"To hold Orbegoso and Felipe Iligan liable for the offenses charged, there must be proof that they conspired with their co-accused in their commission. The records, however, are bereft of such proof," Tanguanco said in his decision.

Tanguanco's 131-page decision was read for over four hours.

He and four of his staffers took turns in reading the ruling.

As the not guilty charge was read on Orbegoso, his 24-year-old daughter and his older sister broke into tears. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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NPA land mine kills Army major, lieutenant

KIDAPAWAN CITY—AT LEAST three soldiers, including a major and lieutenant, were killed in a land mine explosion set off by communist rebels in Tulunan, North Cotabato on Friday morning, the military said.

Col. Ruperto Pabustan, commander of the Army's 602nd Infantry Brigade based in Carmen town, said troops from the Army's 39th Infantry Battalion were on their way to a medical mission when one of their vehicles hit a land mine in Barangay Nabundasan around 10 a.m.

The casualties were on a six-by-six truck hit by the explosion, according to Pabustan.

He did not give further details or provide the identities of the casualties.

At least seven others have been wounded, according to another report reaching the military's Southern Command.

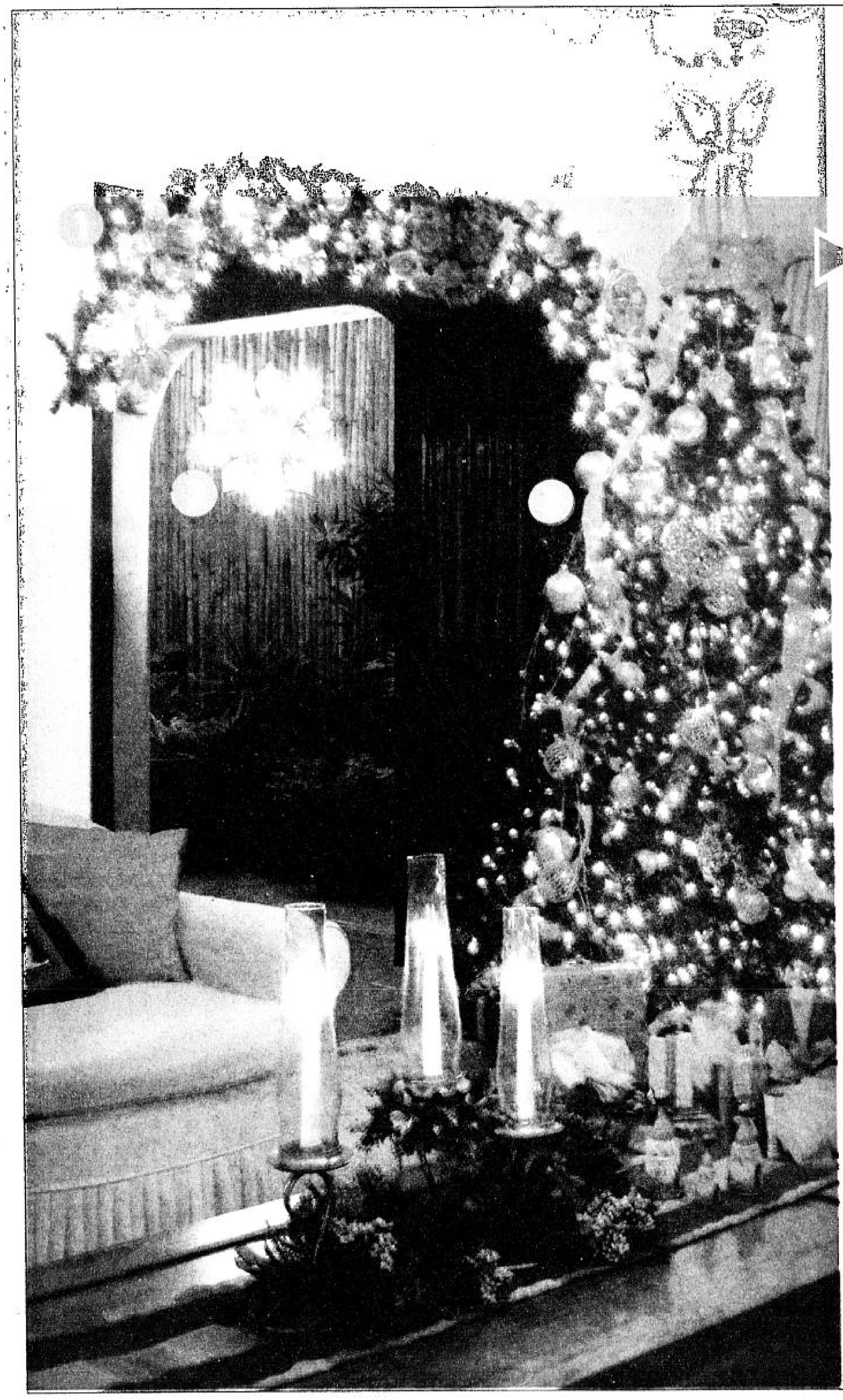
Pabustan said the New People's Army's use of land mines is a violation of international protocols on war.

But the communist movement has maintained that it uses a type of land mine that does not violate human rights and international humanitarian conventions.

In an earlier press statement, Adan Sindapan, spokesperson of the National Democratic Front (NDF) in Western Mindanao, said the NPA is using command-detonated land mines which will only explode when operated by a combatant.

The Ottawa Protocol in 1996 has banned the use of this type of weaponry because it kills people even after wars have ceased.

Jeffrey Tupas and Ryan Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau



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- Make sure to buy Christmas lights of good quality to prevent accidents that could lead to fires.
- Choose the blinking Christmas lights rather than the non-blinking ones for they consume less electricity.
- Don't plug all your Christmas lights in one socket. Use multiple outlets.

2.
- Turn off and unplug all Christmas lights and "parols" before sleeping.
- For lights and decors outside your homes and offices, use only those designated for outdoor use.
- Use bulbs of lower wattage for your Christmas light fixtures so you can save on your electric bill.

3.
- Don't leave the Christmas tree switched on and candles lighted overnight to prevent fires.
- Keep flammable objects away from your Christmas tree. All incandescent light sources, no matter how small they are, produce heat and can cause fires.

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'I am overwhelmed with gratitude'

By Armond C. Ave
Tacloban City

The author is the boy with the rare disease featured in the Inquirer *Visayas in July this year. Thanks to the generosity of* Inquirer *readers, Armond Ave, 14, has not only been given a new lease on life. Most importantly, Armond, who proves to be a gifted young writer, shares his world—harrowing pains, joys and little triumphs over his debilitating disease—with us as a way of thanking those who helped him get through his ordeal.*

THE EARLIEST SYMPTOMS ARE USUALLY STIFF neck that eventually becomes coupled with neck pain and body weakness. The progression of the disease may be slow or fast, depending on how severe the disease is. Mine was fast.

It started to develop in December 2004, when I started to have daily stiff necks, weekly headache, fever, teary eyes (especially when exposed to bright light) and slight blurring of vision. These all persisted even if I were taking several paracetamol tablets a day. So I consulted an orthopedic surgeon in February. I was diagnosed with Ankylosing Spondylitis and the doctor said there was no cure or treatment but I could be relieved from pain with analgesics.

We sought second opinions from other doctors but they, too, all said it was really Ankylosing Spondylitis...

And yes, there is no cure.

At first, it was not easy for me to accept [the diagnosis]. My whole body shivered to learn it was to be my fate. I convinced myself the arthritis was just temporary. I then started taking a pain reliever (Arcoxia 120 mg), which costs P67.50 per tablet. I had to drink one daily before going to school so that I could be relieved of the pain. By March, I started drinking it twice a day because the pain worsened. In the same month, I started to have fever daily after school, accompanied by headache. My body began to weaken.

By April, I started to hear cracks in my neck. We had it examined by X-ray including the rest of my spine. The doctor said my spine had lost its natural curves so he advised me to have traction placed in my neck and my lower back. Desperate to improve my condition, my family and I agreed with the traction and so I lied on a special orthopedic bed for 40 days without having toilet and bath.

It was a long agony for me. Above my head was a 7-kilo weight pulling my head upward and another 10-kilo weight pulling my pelvis. I wore a neck brace/collar while on bed.

Colored tablets

After 40 days, the natural curves of my spine were back but the pain in my neck and left leg worsened. I was allowed to stand and walk short distances but still had to wear a collar and another brace around my waist. I took calcium tablets and many other colored tablets.

My family said all those tablets would make me feel better.

I took all the tablets daily and was temporarily and slightly relieved from pain but I was definitely not feeling better.

ARMOND

I felt I was dying. Day by day my body slowly weakened. I cried because of the unbearable pain. It seemed like my pain threshold suddenly became too [low].

By May, I had difficulty twisting my neck, standing, walking, running and even sleeping. I could not sleep flat because it was painful in the neck so I slept with more than three pillows, I also had to maintain one sleeping position the entire night or else I would be awakened and feel the twisting pain again. I remember those nights when I forgot to lie still, I had to clamp my mouth shut because I did not want to wake my younger sister with my crying.

Just when the sun started rising and I'd think it was all just a nightmare, another horror would begin: the most unbearable pain would set in. The pain was worst in the morning after sleep and naturally I would find it difficult to rise from bed.

Then one day, I spoke and found out I was having difficulty speaking too! I ate and food got stuck in my throat.

I wished it was just for that day but it went the same the next day... and the next... and the week [after]. I had to drink much water to help the food go through my stomach.

By June, when I could no longer suppress the screams (due to pain) I used to hide, I consulted another rheumatologist from the UERMM (University of the East-Ramon Magsaysay Medical Center) to ask for alternatives to the management of my disease. She studied the X-ray films of my spine and told me that my vertebral space was narrowing which caused the immobility of my spine.

The rheumatologist said, "There is good and a bad news for you: what you have is incurable. There is no cure for it..."

As if I did not know it already but it really hurt to hear it again.

"Oh, don't despair *kaagad*! There is no cure but there is treatment. The progression can be stopped."

Now that is called hope but I was afraid to hope. It sounded too good to be true.

"The bad news is, the medication for the treatment is very expensive. A recently discovered treatment for Ankylosing Spondylitis called Infliximab, can stop the progression of the disease. It comes in vials and needs to be infused nine times, two vials each time for each session. Each vial costs P35,000."

The rheumatologist paused and I did the math. Each session requires two vials for a whole day therapy so it would cost P70,000 per session. To compound the problem, I should undergo nine sessions (that is a year of treatment). Estimated cost of medicine to the tune of P630,000, excluding doctor's professional fees, daily maintenance of medicines and hospitalization cost for every session!

"...two weeks after the first, then four weeks after, then six weeks thereafter," my rheumatologist finished. She was giving the schedule per session.

Fat drops of tears came uninvited. I would not... never burden my *Nanay* (mom) with that amount. I would rather die.

As if the doctor read my mind, she said something about my arthritis progressing fast, and ended with this question, "Given your present condition, in a span of six months, what do you expect to happen this December 2005?"

"Die, I suppose." But of course, I didn't say it aloud.

My family learned of my options. I said never mind, we don't have money and God has His reasons for wishing me to meet Him early.

Astounding generosity

But *Nanay* would not quit. She vowed I'd get Infliximab. More like *suntok sa buwan* (aiming for the moon) but if aiming for the moon is what would comfort *Nanay* then let her target all the moons including those of Saturn.

Nanay did aim her way through the Inquirer Visayas page. She made our problem known in public. Then I witnessed the astounding *bayanihan* (cooperative) virtue of the Filipinos. I received prayers, sympathy and financial aid from individuals I did not know and from different institutions all over the Philippines.

I was able to undergo five sessions out of nine required so far. I found it very effective. My sufferings lessened. Slowly I recovered my strength. I began to walk without the braces around my neck and the support around the waist.

I can now sleep uninterrupted, move my head a little, eat with only slight difficulty, go on everyday without screaming from pain.

I know all things happened for good to those who believe in Him—the God Almighty.

Through this illness I learned that there are Good Samaritans in this country although we are in crisis. Many answered to the call of my mother's cry for help to finance my treatment. I am more than grateful to those kindhearted people who had exerted effort to raise funds for the extension of my life.

Blessed are those generous for surely God will reward them a hundred fold.

I am brimming with gratitude—"*siksik, liglig at umaapaw* (overflowing)."

In my own little way, I want to acknowledge the help of the Inquirer in finding a way to ease the burden I caused to my family and for making me feel that my life is significant enough to save. To my school, PUP (Polytechnic University of the Philippines), to PCSO (Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office), to CEU (Centro Escolar University), Health Dimensions, FGO, EL Shaddai movement especially to Father Arman, to several radio stations, from people from all walks of life especially to Ermelinda Castro, Rose Ang of Baguio City, Lily Sy of Alabang, Franny Jacinto of Makati, to my family, to my auntie Babie, to my mom and dad, and to my sisters Nikki and Aimee. Thanks a lot.

The battle between life and death is not finished yet but I am happy to keep it in my heart that there are special people God sends for me... and I pray for their good health. God bless us all!

Century-old tower in Cebu regains charm

By Jolene R. Bulambot
Liloan, Cebu

LOCATED IN AN UPHILL AREA OVERLOOKING the splendid Mactan Channel, the Bagacay Point lighthouse in Liloan town in Cebu, stands as a symbol of stability and charm.

For the past 101 years, this white octagonal tower has provided guiding light to mariners, navigators and fishermen from coastal towns in northern Cebu.

The lighthouse has been a favorite subject of many painters and photographers for its magnificent architectural design.

Named after its home—Sitio Bagacay, Barangay Catarman in Liloan—which is known for its brown sandy beach, pottery and delicious delicacies, the landmark was built in 1904 by virtue of an executive order issued on July 28, 1903 by William Howard Taft, who came to the country in 1900 as president of the Philippine Commission and later appointed US governor general.

According to the Philippine Coast Guard, the 72-foot tower has an active focal plane of 146 feet. It sits on an elevated 5,000-sq m government property, 22 km from the main road. Its white flash provides illumination every five seconds.

Capt. Elson Hermogeno, PCG station commander of the Central-Eastern Visayas District, said that like other lighthouses in the country, the Bagacay Point lighthouse was solar-powered.

"After a century of its existence where once it served as the watch tower during the war, the lighthouse in Bagacay still stands tall as a guiding beacon for the safe navigation of our mariners in passage to and from Cebu City," he said.

Barangay Chair Roy Pilapil said people flocked to the *parola*, its local name, for a picnic or to bask at the sight of the Mactan Channel and the serenity of the place.

"I grew up here seeing the lighthouse standing there. As kids, we usually climbed the tower with its 93 steps and once we got to the top, we were amazed at the beautiful view of the sea," Pilapil said.

He admitted that the *parola* had been so neglected for several years that weeds have grown everywhere in the area and the paints have started to peel off. It also ran the risk of being vandalized.

Last year, the lighthouse underwent a makeover, thanks to the "Adopt a Lighthouse Program" of the PCG, which was conceived six years ago to restore and repair lighthouses in the country.

"There is a need to preserve the beauty of the lighthouses and the need to maintain them to provide guidance so that mariners will be able to determine their positions and such that they will know the dangers to navigation," said Commodore Ramon Liwag, PCG district commander.

"Many of the lighthouses in the Philippines have aesthetic beauty and serenity. The lighthouse stands for dignity to humanity," he said.

Of the 116 lighthouses in his district, the Bagacay is just one of the few considered "primary" because they are critical to navigation, Liwag said.

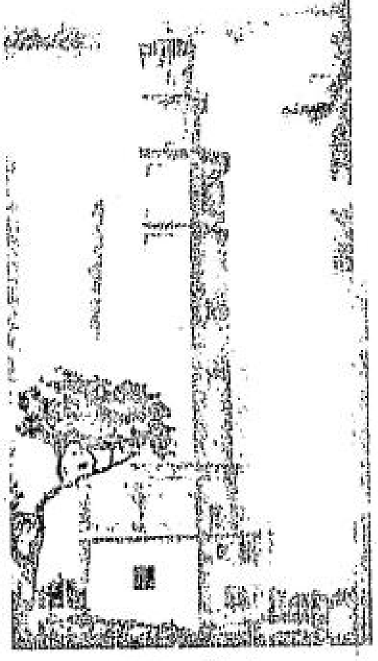
Like most government agencies, he said the PCG did not have enough funds to preserve and maintain the lighthouses.

Coastal Highpoint Venture Inc. (CHVI) has adopted the Bagacay Point lighthouse through a memorandum of agreement it signed with the PCG last year.

CHVI will help restore and repair the lighthouse, Liwag said. The firm, together with Ayala Land affiliate Cebu Holdings Inc., is developing Amara, a seaside 46-ha residential property nearby.

"They (CHVI) saw the value of the Bagacay Point lighthouse for ecotourism so that their representatives approached us to support the restoration of the lighthouse. Since the adoption of the lighthouse last year, it [has been] painted and maintained," said Liwag.

He said CHVI provided additional security in the area and would help the Coast Guard maintain it.



BAGACAY Point lighthouse
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Initial plans involve the construction of a boardwalk, coffee shops, stalls and restaurants to attract more tourists.

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Black bug spread places DA on alert in Sorsogon

BAGO PAMAN KUMALAT ANG SALOT NA 'TO!
HA!

PILI, CAMARINES SUR—THE BLACK BUG, A pest that sucks rice dry at its milk stage, has spread to one more town in Sorsogon province after its presence was confirmed last month in two towns, according to a Department of Agriculture (DA) technician.

The black bug infestation, spotted early November in the towns of Gubat and Prieto Diaz, was confirmed to have spread in the town of Bulan, DA technician Eduardo Collantes Jr. said.

In November, Evangeline de la Trinidad, chief of the regional crop protection center, reported the black bug infestation has been validated in some 20 hectares of rice farms in Ogao, Gubat town and 50 hectares in Carayat, Prieto Diaz town.

De la Trinidad said the black bug infestation was introduced in the two coastal towns of Sorsogon from fishing vessels that regularly ply the Gubat-Samar route.

During the vegetative stage, black bugs stunt rice plants by feeding on the youngest leaf shoots that turn yellowish to reddish brown before the plants die.

Collantes revealed that this week, a team from the DA regional office has been deployed to Bulan town to check the spread of the black bug that he said was confirmed to have spread in the villages of Pawa-Lahong, Otavi, Fabrica and G. del Pilar.

He said the DA team was asked to contain and eradicate the rice pest using a method called "light trapping" that uses 500-watt bulb to attract the mating insects.

Collantes said the team follows the black bug's behavior of mating under a bright light to entrap and kill them.

He said the eradication process using "light trapping" is timed two days before and during the full moon.

The DA regional office here is working closely with the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) in "instituting measures to contain the spread" of the pest in the entire Luzon area amid reports that it has spread in the three towns in Sorsogon.

Amid reports of the black bug infestation in Sorsogon, the DA office in Quezon City has organized an inter-agency task force to come up with recommendations to manage and control the black bug infestation.

Among the recommendations, the DA office pushes the observance of a fallow period of one month in rice planting to break the life cycle of the insect to reduce its population.

The agriculture office further recommends "synchronous" planting and setting up of light traps in cases of high pest population. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

OVE BARGA
Davao's Best B

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

BIG BROTHER
A child touches a replica of Santa Claus standing in front of the Davao City Hall. The overgrown Santa Claus is part of the city hall's holiday decoration.

ROUNDUP

Drug tests in Negros

BACOLOD CITY—At least 400 of the more than 2,000 employees of the Negros Occidental provincial government were subjected to random drug testing that began Thursday. The tests are also mandatory for all department and office heads and chiefs of hospitals. Gov. Joseph Marañon said he ordered the random drug tests at the capitol to assure the public that provincial government employees are drug free. The two-day random drug testing was being conducted at the capitol by personnel of the Negros Occidental Drug Rehabilitation Center based in Victorias. Mary Ann Manayon-Lamis, officer in charge of the provincial legal office, said the tests were conducted after the police arrested a capitol employee and an acting treasurer in Talisay City in September in separate operations.
Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

6 new houses

ROXAS CITY—Gawad Kalinga (GK) handed in six new houses to the first beneficiaries of its shelter program here during a turnover ceremony Dec. 9. The turnover, held at the GK Holy Family Village in Sitio Pamombongan, Barangay Milibili in this city, was led by Antonio Meloto, founder and executive director of the GK Foundation. The 7,492-square meter property was donated by Neri Joachim "Dandy" Ong, a developer and vice president of SHJ Realty Development Corp. Meloto challenged Capiceños to take the next step in sustaining the program started by the local GK caretaker group. *Felipe Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau*

1st women's bazaar

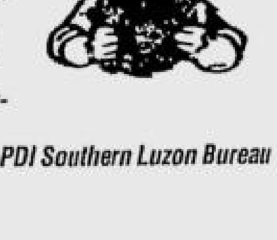
DAVAO CITY—The First Mindanao Women's Bazaar was held at the NCCC Mall on Dec. 11-13. Organized by the Mindanao Commission on Women (MCW), the bazaar highlighted the crucial role that women play in the industry by showcasing their products, goods and services. The MCW connects women producers and workers to markets, said Geejay Arriola, MCW program officer. *Madonna Virola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

6 injured in bus holdup

BALANGA CITY—Six passengers, including a British national, were injured on Friday dawn when five holdup men exchanged gunfire with a passenger in a Zambales-bound Victory Liner, police said. The holdup men boarded the bus in the City of San Fernando in Pampanga and announced the holdup when the bus reached Barangay Saguing in Dinalupihan, Bataan. Jone Francis Dolera, 40, of Botolan, Zambales, resisted but was shot several times by one of the suspects. Adriano Adsuara, 53, a security officer assigned to the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, shot one of the suspects. Some passengers were injured by stray bullets.
Greg Refraccion, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Road repair rushed

LUCENA CITY—Crew men from the Department of Public Works and Highways are now repairing the stretch of the Maharlika Highway from Pagbilao to Calauag towns to beat the holiday rush. Ronnel Tan, engineer of the DPWH-Quezon 4th Engineering District, said several intermittent sections of the Maharlika Highway in Quezon were damaged by rains that hit the province two weeks ago. He pointed to the Pagbilao-Atimonan part of the highway as severely affected. He said the road along the Quirino Highway, has also been undergoing repair.
Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau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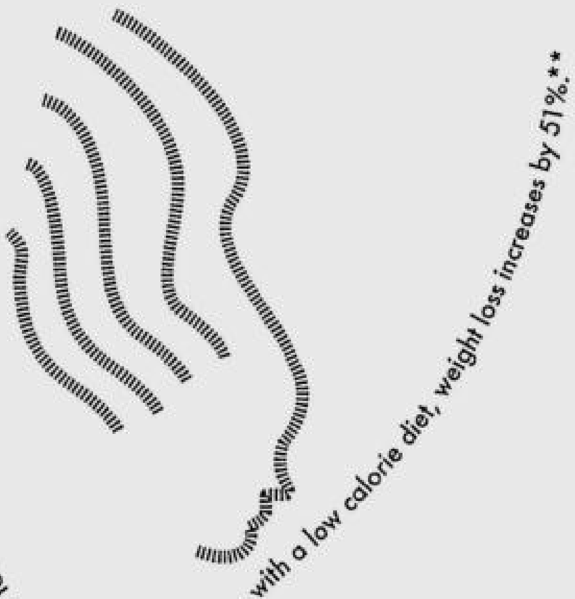

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MINING, SOCIAL CONCERNS

Sorsogon, Quezon see naked protest

LUCENA CITY—HEAVY RAINS failed to stop a dozen members of a fraternity in Sorsogon City from staging their own version of the Oblation Run to protest the operation of the Lafayette Mining Corp. in the island town of Rapu-Rapu, Albay.

Their fraternity brothers in this city staged theirs, to dramatize their support for what they said was the search for truth in the Hello Garci scandal that rocked the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The Sorsogon run by members of the Alpha Phi Omega (APO) fraternity started at the Our Lady of Fatima Church at around 11 a.m. and ended at the Capitol Park amid a heavy downpour.

A text message sent to INQUIRER by the fraternity said the Oblation Run is a dramatization of protests against the continued operation of Lafayette and to draw the attention of the people of Sorsogon to the dangers of the mining operation.

Spill

Lafayette executives said the firm has taken steps to address concerns over the firm's mining operations following the accidental spill of cyanide from the firm's tailings dam.

Lafayette said the operations of small scale mines should be the focus of efforts to bring responsible mining into the country because small scale mine operations are the ones that destroy the environment.

The Oblation Run in this city was held a day after its original version was staged in UP Diliman, where two naked women who joined the annual event stole the scene from the runners.

At least 50 male members of the APO from different chapters in Quezon, wearing black masks, ran naked inside a college campus here amid screams and catcalls.

Permit

The fraternity wanted to hold the run in this city's commercial district, but Lucena Mayor Ramon Talaga Jr. stood his ground and denied the APO a permit.

"They can hold it inside any school ground but not in the city streets," Talaga earlier said in an interview.

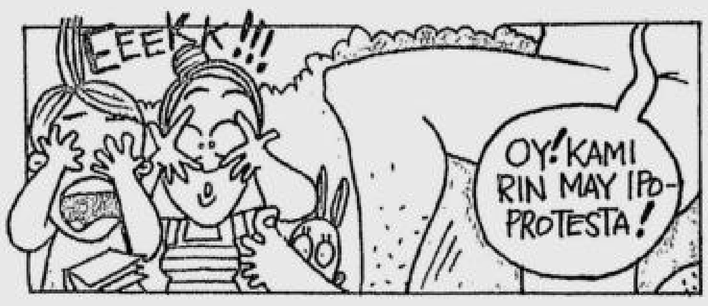
Previous runs were held in the main streets inside the city proper.

The mayor turned down last-minute attempts by local APO leaders to persuade him to allow the nude run in the main city avenue.

"There is no option left for us but to look for a place where we can hold the event, with a permit of course. I was able to secure one from the official of the Enverga University Foundation (EUF)," said Arnel Avila, past president of Club 1925, an association of APO alumni in Quezon, who has been coordinating the local nude run for the past seven years.

Avila said the event was "not simply a fun run just for the heck of it."

"Our youth, especially the members of the Greek-lettered organizations, also want to convey a social message to the Filipino people that speaking out the naked truth will all set us free, especially during these politically turbulent times," he said. *Delfin Mallari Jr. and Bobby Labalan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*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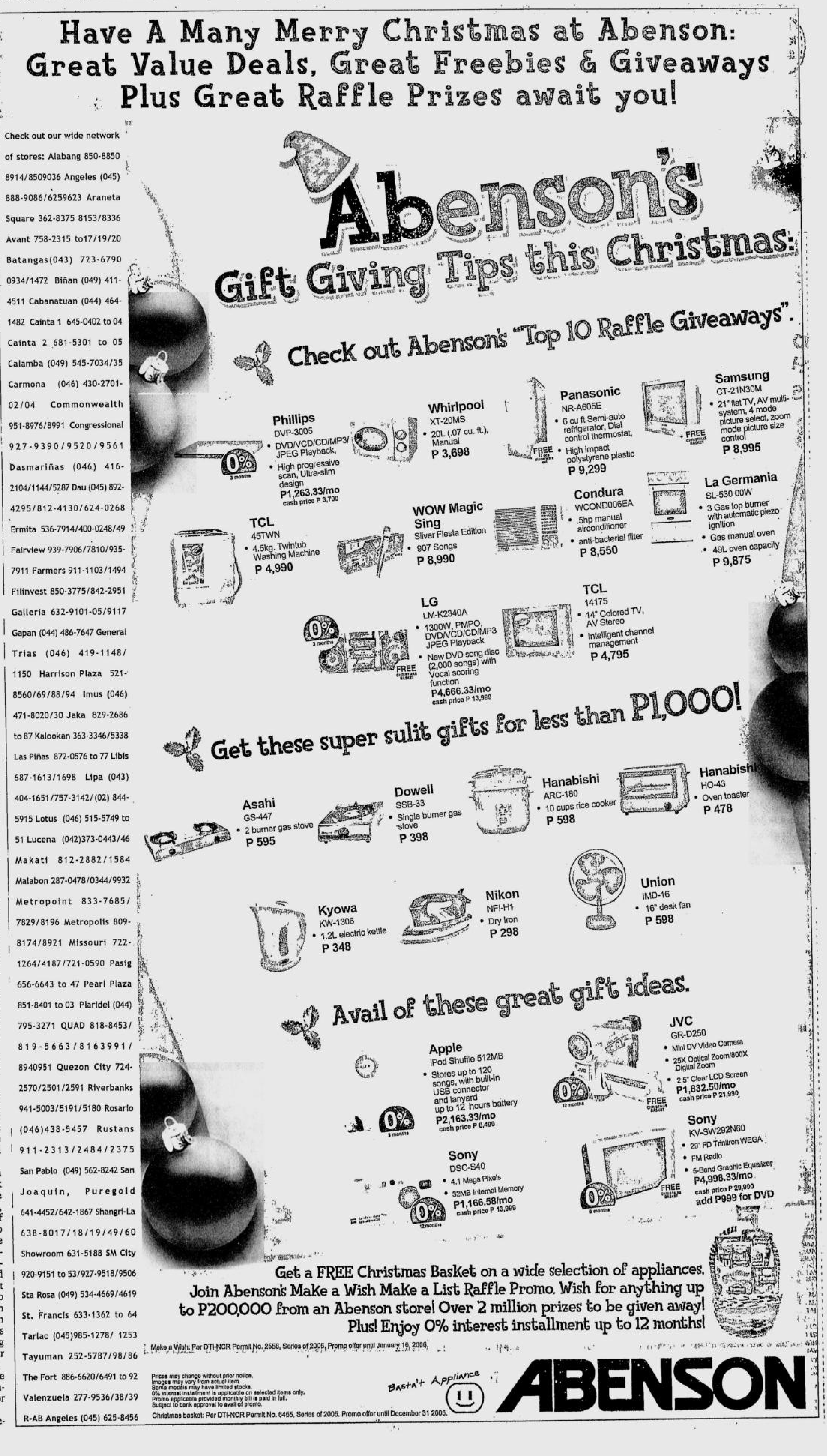
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Basta't Appliance
ABENSON

Nora seeks rehab to beat drug charge in LA

From page A1

terpreter, but a hearing into the matter was postponed until Dec. 22. Her attorney could not be reached for comment.

In previous INQUIRER reports, Aunor's trial date for her drug possession case was moved from Oct. 14 to Dec. 12. Before that, her pre-trial had been moved from Sept. 30 to Nov. 10.

Aunor's defense lawyers Sherwin Eldeberg and Claire Espina of Eldeberg & Espina said the presence of the Filipino singer-actress was not needed on Nov. 10.

Aunor's defense lawyers scored a victory during the preliminary hearing in July, when one of the prosecution witnesses, a rookie airport policeman, admitted after a gruelling cross-examination that he failed to read the Filipino singer-actress her rights.

Officer Yves Didier said he also failed to give Aunor the Tagalog interpreter that she requested at the time of her arrest on March 30, when airport screeners stopped her on her way to Oakland.

Procedure dictates that after a person is officially taken into custody and before any interrogation takes place, police should inform the suspect of his right to remain silent (and that anything he says can be used against him in a court of law) and of his right to have an attorney present during questioning.

Tense and teary-eyed

A tense and teary-eyed Aunor had turned up for the July hearing at the Airport Courthouse, with Superior Court Judge Joseph Shino Biderman presiding.

Dressed casually in a gray top and white pants, she appeared agitated throughout the proceedings, unlike in April when she was relaxed, almost calm, as she pleaded not guilty during her arraignment.

Aunor pleaded not guilty to the charge before Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Paula Adele Mabrey on April 21 at the Los Angeles Airport courthouse. During the arraignment, Mabrey granted three motions: for evidence split, for the waiver of appearance by the defendant except for trial and other evidentiary hearings, and for a Tagalog interpreter at all hearings.

Relishes ordinary life

Since her arrest early this year, Aunor had remained in and around San Francisco, giving a series of concerts for her devoted immigrant fans and carried on with the "ordinary life" that she had come to relish.

In the US, she said, she got to do ordinary things, like shopping at the mall and taking public transport.

In an interview with the Los Angeles Times in September, Aunor said she had been living in the San Francisco area since 2004 to gain a measure of anonymity and had put her faith in God to see her through the drug charges. *Reuters*

Hubert loses appeal

From page A1

guilty and sentencing them to 40 years imprisonment each.

Tolentino is now an associate justice.

"Clearly, from the records of this case, there is overwhelming evidence that the above-named accused-appellants on June 29 and 30, 1991 conspired to rape Carmela Vizconde and on the occasion of such a rape, Carmela, together with her mother Estrellita and younger sister Jennifer were killed in the process," the CA said.

Beyond reasonable doubt

According to the court, the prosecution was able to clearly and convincingly establish the presence of conspiracy among the accused.

"Therefore, on the basis of the evidence on record, we find no reason to overturn the conviction of the said accused-appellants as we likewise find them guilty beyond reasonable doubt of the crime of rape with homicide," the CA said.

The court, however, introduced some modification in the sentence when it increased from P150,000 to P200,000 the civil indemnity the lower court had ordered the accused to pay Vizconde patriarch Lauro Vizconde.

But it upheld the other damages set by the Tolentino court, which ordered the accused to pay Vizconde P762,450 in actual damages; P2 million in moral damages, and P97.404.55 in attorney's fees.

Presence in US

While the appeals court also affirmed the ruling of the lower court which found the former policeman Biong guilty as an accessory after the fact, it reduced his sentence from 11 years to 12 years to an indeterminate jail term from six years to 12 years.

Biong, the court said, "assisted the principal accused to conceal and destroy the physical evidence" when he allowed the burning of the bedsheets and blankets found inside the Vizconde house.

On the contentious issue of Webb's alibi that he was in the United States during the killing, the court threw out the defense contention, noting that "alibi has been considered as the weakest of all defenses because it is easy to concoct and difficult to disprove."

Webb had presented, among others, a certification from the US Immigration and Naturalization Service showing that he was in the United States starting March 9, 1991 and came home only on Oct. 26, 1992.

Hubert's evidence

The court said it "seriously doubts" the "evidentiary weight" presented by Webb. It noted that Steven Bucher, acting chief of Records Services Branch of the US INS, had reported "erroneously" on Aug. 10, 1995 that it had no record of the arrival and departure of Webb to and from the United States.

The same office later explained that it failed to exhaustively study all the available information.

"The later certifications issued by the US INS modifying its first certification and which was issued only a few weeks earlier, come across as a strained effort by Webb at establishing his presence in the United States in order to reinforce his flimsy alibi," the court said.

According to the court, Webb's evidence did not discount the possibility that he was in the Philippines at an interim period, particularly during June 29 and 30, 1991.

Airline ticket

The appellate court also pointed out that both the United Airlines flight manifest and ticket Webb presented to show he left for the United States were mere "photocopies" and that no originals were produced as evidence.

The CA also pointed out that most of the testimonies in favor of Webb came from either relatives or close friends.

"It is for this reason that we regard their testimonies with an eye of suspicion for it is but natural ... for a close relative or friend to give weight to blood ties and close relationship in times of dire needs...," the court said.

On the claim by the accused that Tolentino was biased, the court said that records of the case did not show Tolentino as being biased. It noted that, in fact, court records indicated "the trial judge's diligence in protecting the rights of the accused-appellants."

Jessica's testimony

The court said that "bias or partiality is not proper consideration when a trial judge excludes evidence, which, in her appreciation, are not relevant and competent."

On the claims of the accused that star prosecution witness Jessica Alfaro was not a credible witness because of her addiction to drugs, the court noted that Alfaro's testimony was "aptly corroborated by the testimonies of the other prosecution witnesses."

"It is also noteworthy to add that what makes Alfaro's testimony worth of belief is the marked compatibility between such testimony and the physical evidence. Physical evidence is evidence of the highest order. It speaks eloquently than a hundred witnesses," the court said.

Deputizing for SC

Cosico's decision was concurred in by Associate Justices Regalado Maambong and Lucenito Tagle.

"This is a Supreme Court decision but it can still be appealed through a motion for reconsideration," Zuño told the INQUIRER.

Not yet final

Zuño explained that since the case involved capital punishment, it was automatically brought for appeal before the high court but in this case, the high court decided to assign the matter to the Court of Appeals for review.

"It's like it deputized the CA to review the RTC decision," Zuño said.

He said the motion for reconsideration could be filed with the appeals court.

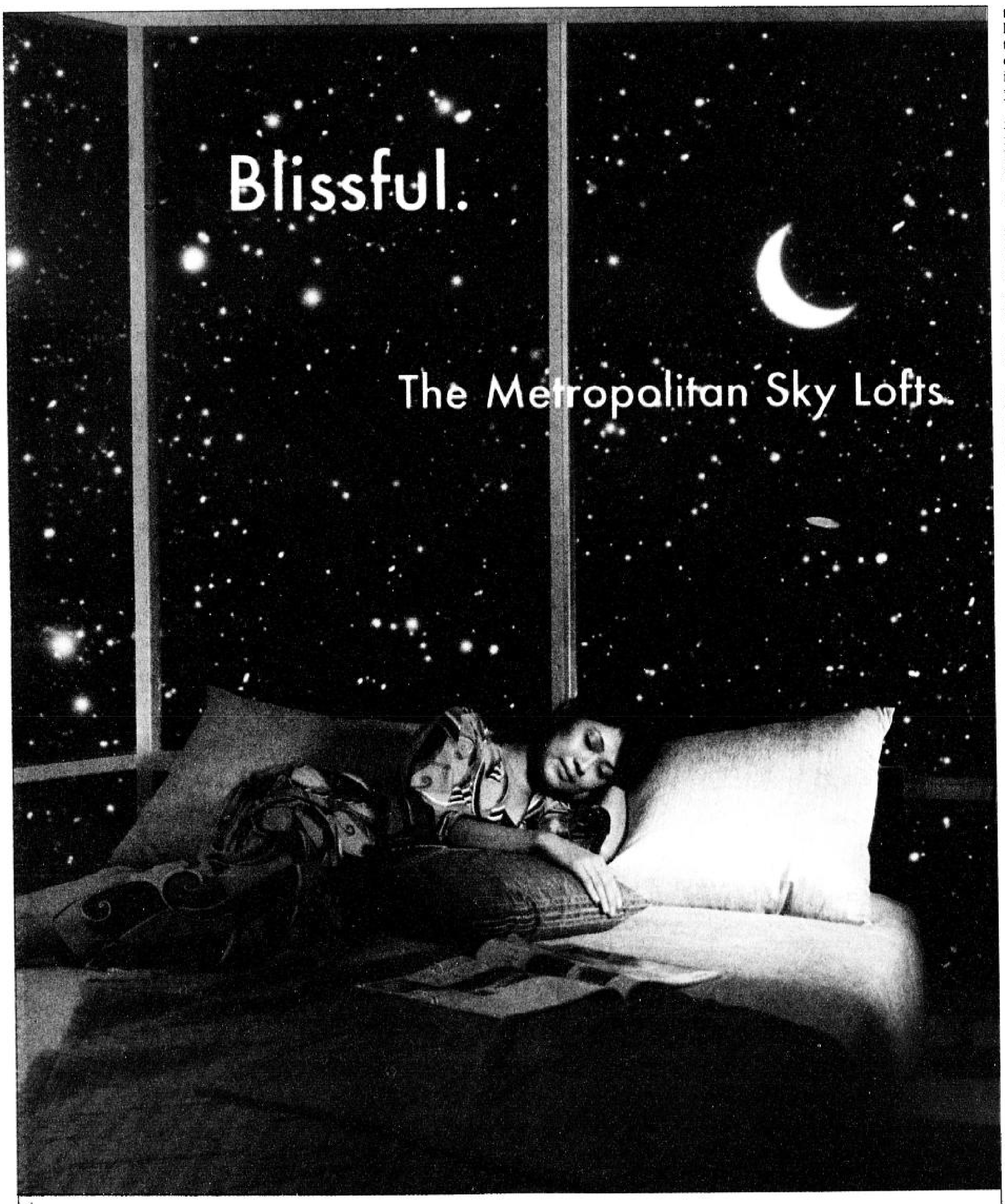
"There is a still a legal remedy. They can still file a motion for reconsideration. It is not yet final," Zuño said.

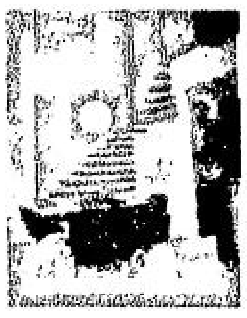
Son's innocence

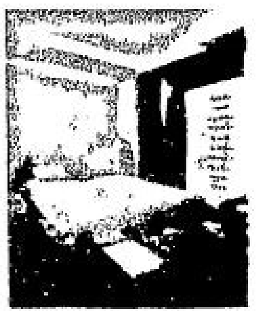
The Supreme Court or the Court of Appeals rarely reverse themselves on a decision.

Talking on ANC, Mrs. Elizabeth Webb insisted on her son's innocence.

"The disappointment (over the court ruling) is really very, very heavy in our hearts," she said. "From the very bottom of our hearts, we know that Hubert is innocent."







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DOJ to reinvestigate TV director's slay

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE MAKATI REGIONAL TRIAL COURT has ordered a reinvestigation of the homicide and assault charges against the suspected gunman in the June 8 slaying of television director Louis Santiago outside a bar at the Ayala Center in Makati City.

"The court, in the interest of justice, resolves to grant [prosecution's motion for reinvestigation] to give time for the prosecution to reevaluate and reassess the findings earlier made by [State Prosecutors]," Makati RTC Branch 134 Presiding Judge Perpetua Atal-Pano said in her order issued on Dec. 5.

A private prosecutor representing the family of the slain TV director immediately welcomed the reinvestigation of the case, saying it would best serve justice.

"There would now be another venue to look again at the evidence we have, and I am hopeful that it will give us results that will lead us to the truth," Claro Certeza told the INQUIRER.

Atal-Pano issued the order in response to Certeza's request to have the Department of Justice take a second look at the charges they had elevated in court against suspected gunman Oliver Jameiro, 32, citing that statements of new witnesses indicated that Jameiro may be part of a ploy to disrupt the case's investigation.

The scheduled hearing on the cases of homicide and frustrated homicide with direct assault filed against Jameiro at the Makati RTC was cancelled Thursday afternoon after Judge Atal-Pano ordered the justice department to reinvestigate the charges.

The charges were elevated to the court after the DOJ found probable cause to hold Jameiro liable for Santiago's death on June 8 during a bar brawl outside the V-bar at the Ayala Center in Makati City and for the injuries sustained by Senior Insp. Merquiodi Bodanio while responding to the commotion.

The court also rejected a dismissal plea filed by Jameiro's counsel, Alex Bansil, in a bid to quash the charges even before his client was arraigned, which shall place him under the court's jurisdiction.

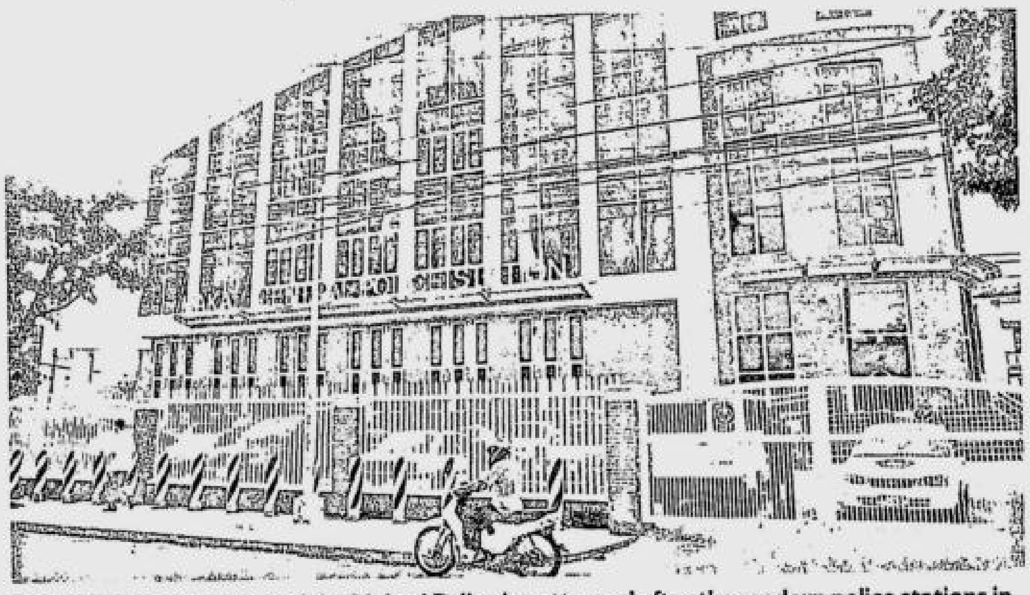
Jameiro had recanted a confession he earlier executed before the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) saying he was tortured and compelled to sign the affidavit.

"He (Jameiro) is not the shooter, but he may be part of a cover up. We are hoping that other witnesses will surface to identify the real shooter," said Certeza.

The DOJ was given two months to complete the reinvestigation, which it would conduct along with pending preliminary hearings of three other criminal cases that the NBI and the Makati Police Department (MPD) separately filed against other personalities involved in the shooting.

"We will conduct the reinvestigation along with the hearings on other cases relating to the shooting, so that after the hearings we will be filing an amended information and proceed to one trial for all the cases," said State Prosecutor Bernardo Parico, one of the government lawyers who had recommended Jameiro's indictment.

The , other cases include separate charges of accomplices to homicide and direct assault against a person of authority filed against Charito Angeles, the identified owner of a Toyota Hi-Lux that witnesses said was used by the gunman to flee the crime scene.



THE NEW headquarters of the Makati Police is patterned after the modern police stations in the world.
ERIK ARAZAS

Makati police move to new home

By Tarra V. Quismundo

IT MAY WELL BE THE NATION'S BEST POlice headquarters.

By itself a force to reckon with, the new Makati Central Police Headquarters opened this week as the new home of the Makati Police Department (MPD).

"The police headquarters was patterned after modern police stations around the world. I believe it's the best in the country," said Southern Police District Director Wilfredo Garcia, superior officer of the MPD and six other police stations in southern metro.

MPD's officers, investigators, and operating units completed this week its transfer to the new headquarters on the corner of Ayala Extension and Yakal Street, just within sight of Makati's Central Business District (CBD).

Strategically located beside the Makati Central Fire Station, the new headquarters was the first structure to rise on a building complex that would bring together the city's protective services, the Makati Information and Community Relations Department said.

City Hall pursued this plan to bring its police, fire, and public safety departments closer to the critical CBD area which hosts several embassies and consulates, banks and financial institutions, multinational corporations, and commercial centers.

"In terms of aesthetics, it is impressive to our clients [the public], because usually when people see nice facilities, they feel that service must also be good. And that's our target, to give better services to the public," said Supt. Efren Ysulat, MPD Deputy for Administration in charge of the station's transfer.

Only a few more of MPD's units stayed behind at the old headquarters on F. Zobel Street in Barangay Poblacion, near the new Makati City Hall building. Ysulat said the transfer would be completed by the coming week, just in time for Christmas.

"It will definitely enhance our operational capability, in rendering services to the public. It will also improve our morale, considering that we are proud to have this kind of facility," Garcia said.

Patterned after the headquarters of the well-known New York and Los Angeles police departments in the United States, the P192-million Makati Central Police Headquarters has four stories of space for the MPD's investigation, operations, and administrative units.

The new structure may well rival the city's impressive skyscrapers, with its sloping glass-paneled exterior that mirrors the sky, and an eye-catching top floor crowned by a helipad.

Manila Water to increase utility rates starting Jan. 1

By Christine Gaylican

CUSTOMERS OF THE MANILA WAter Company Inc. will be paying 56 centavos per cubic meter more per day starting Jan. 1 next year due to the rise in the inflation rate and higher electricity costs.

Thus, a household consuming an average 10 to 30 cubic meters a month will pay an additional of P10 to P16 or from P304 to P320 per month, said MWCI director for regulatory affairs Virgilio Rivera Jr.

But Rivera said that there would be a drop in the foreign currency differential adjustment (FCDA) from 46 centavos to 37 centavos per cubic meter due to the recent gains of the peso against the US dollar.

"We also want to emphasize that the additional expanded value added tax of two percent is yet to be factored in our rates," he said.

Under its concession agreement with the government, Manila Water can automatically increase its water charges each year to reflect adjustments for inflation while the forex component of bills is reflected on a quarterly basis.

Manila Water supplies water and sewerage services to Manila's east zone: parts of Manila, Quezon City, Makati, Mandalaluyong, Quezon City, Marikina, Pasig, Taguig Pateros and a portion of Rizal province.

Maynilad's service area covers all of Manila except San Andres and Sta. Ana, parts of Quezon City, parts of Makati, Caloocan, Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Valenzuela, Navotas, Malabon, Cavite City and some towns of Cavite province.

In the west zone, customers of Maynilad Water Services Inc. have yet to be informed as to how much the increase would be as regulators are still deliberating on the rate hike.

Sources from the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System Regulatory Office said they have to factor in the non-payment of Maynilad of their concession fees beginning in August.

"However, because of the delays in the announcement as to how much the adjustment would be, there will also be considerations to be given to Maynilad because this would affect potential cashflows," a high-ranking MWSS official explained.

The rate adjustment for Maynilad customers will be finalized and announced next week.

Grenade found under car of former Lacson campaigner in Quezon City

A FRAGMENTATION HAND GRENADE was found the other night under the car of a former campaign manager of Sen. Panfilo Lacson in Quezon City.

Gerald Dequina and his two bodyguards were about to board his red Nissan Sentra with plate number TSZ-805 at the parking lot of Camelot Hotel on Mother Ignacia Street at 10:50 p.m. Thursday when they noticed a white cord on the car's left front wheel.

Upon inspection, they saw that the cord was attached to the safety pin of a hand grenade placed under the car.

SPO3 Arce Resullar and PO2 Dante Bonilla, Dequina's bodyguards, quickly informed the explosives and ordnance disposal unit of the Quezon City Police District, which conducted a "render safe procedure" and recovered the grenade. Dequina was one of Lacson's campaign leaders in the last presidential election. *DJ Yap*

METROBRIEFS

Death for two robbers

TWO men were sentenced to death for allegedly robbing with two other suspects a gas station in Binangonan, Rizal, and shooting to death its manager and two employees five years ago. Regional Trial Court Branch 67 Judge Silvino Pampilo Jr. also ordered George Marciales and Orly Nabia to pay the families of the three victims P6 million in damages. The duo's alleged cohorts Paul Pobre and a certain Jun remain at large. Court records showed that the four allegedly robbed a Caltex Gas Station in Barangay Tayuman at about 8 p.m. on June 22, 2000 of P5,000 cash. Station manager Felix Regencia and attendants Alex Diaz and Byron Dimatulac fought back but the suspects fired at them, killing them instantly. Police arrested Nabia and Marciales after they were positively identified as among the robbers. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

Counterfeit goods seized

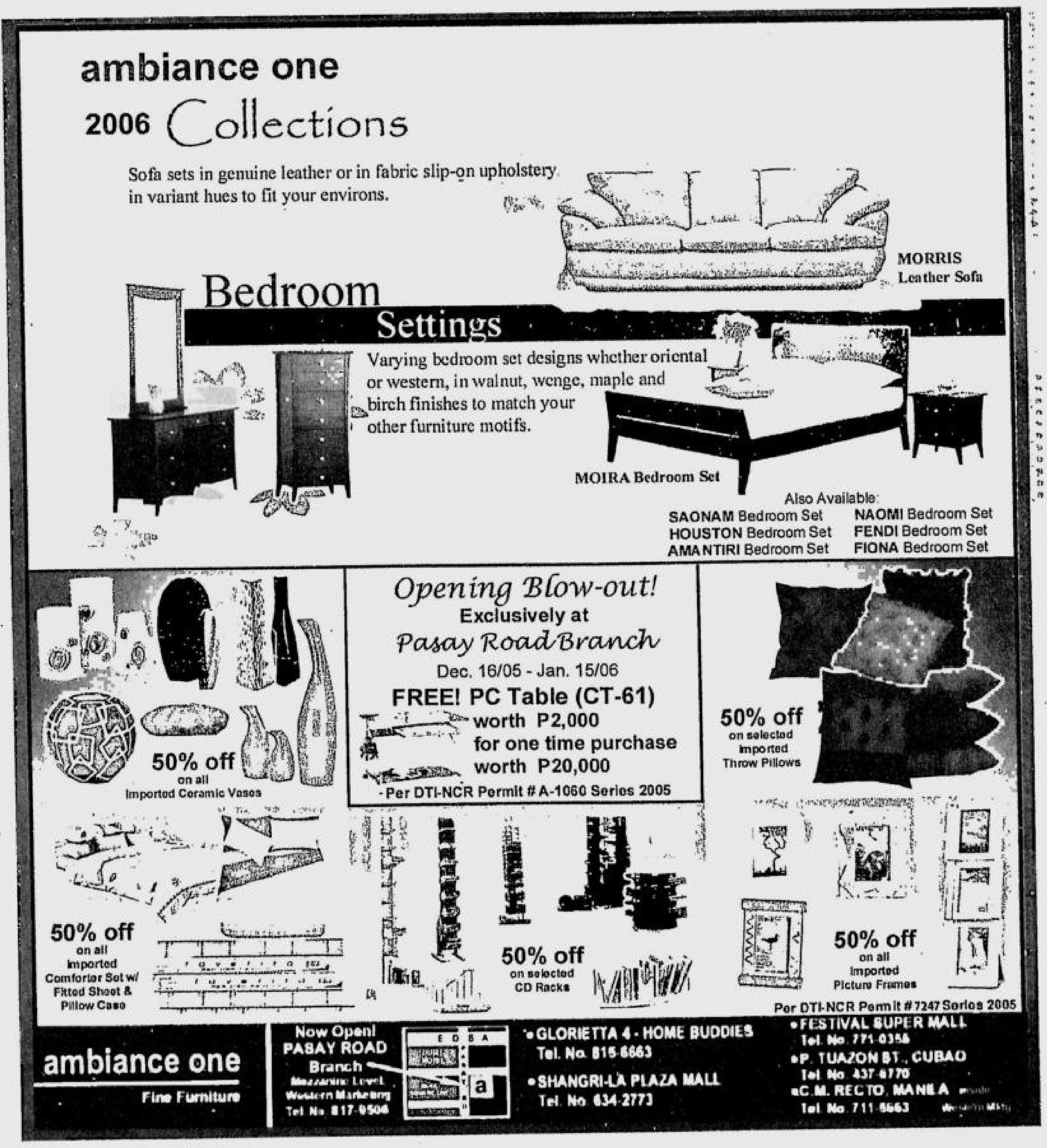
THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation seized P8 million worth of counterfeit goods during simultaneous raids in Tondo and Binondo on Thursday. Operatives raided MCDS General Merchandise stalls and warehouses at 142 Malaya St., San Rafael Village, Tondo, Gen. Lim St., San Rafael Village, Tondo, and Roman St. Binondo. NBI Intellectual Property Rights Division (IPRD) chief Jose Justo Yap said the agents confiscated 10,199 pieces of counterfeit DC Comics Batman and Superman toys. Yap said the raids were conducted based on the complaint of DC Comics' representative, Quisumbing Torres law firm. Charges of trademark infringement and unfair competition were filed against alleged owners Eric Ty and Marites Siasat. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

Health book launching

THE BOOK "Gift of Health" by Germany-based Mariandy Fricke will be launched at 6 p.m. today at PowerBooks, Greenbelt 4, Makati City. The book is a compilation of Fricke's holistic studies and practice, particularly the Andyways method, a mind and body fitness program to boost the body's resistance and slow the aging process.

Trinidad clan reunion

MEMBERS of the Trinidad clan of Zambales, Quezon, and Metro Manila will hold their annual reunion on Dec. 18 at the family beach house in San Narciso, Zambales. Activities include a gift auction, parlor games, and a family photo session. Registration starts at 10 a.m., followed by a thanksgiving mass. Hosts are David and Stella Trinidad. For more information, call Cely Banacia at 4339155/ 0918-297-5529, Mameng Trinidad at 4458211, and Noreen Trinidad-Rin at 047-2247916/ 0919-8929206.



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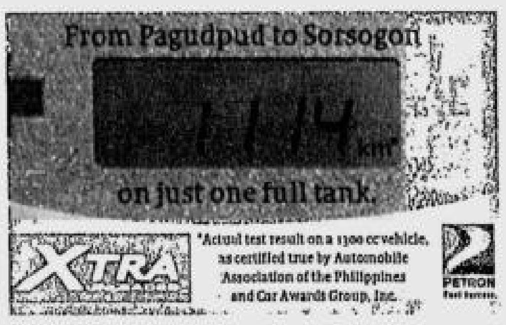
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Key meeting for Wizards, Jewels today

MENTAL PREPARATION HAS BEEN FOREMOST on the list of Magnolia coach Koy Banal.

"This is a mind game, it's not just about skills," said Banal, whose league-leading Wizards will try to strengthen their bid for an outright semifinal berth against the Montaña Jewels in the PBL Heroes Cup at 4 p.m. today at the JCSGO Gym in Cubao.

The Wizards are coming off a 69-65 triumph over Granny Goose which Banal said was a big relief after Magnolia's stunning loss to neophyte Far Eastern Insurance.

STANDINGS	W	L
Magnolia	6	1
Granny	5	3
Montaña	4	3
R. or Shine	4	3
Hapee	4	3
Harbour	3	5
Toyota Otis	2	6
Far E. Ins.	2	6

GAMES TODAY
(*JCSGOGym*)
2 p.m.—Rain or Shine vs Hapee-PCU
4 p.m.—Montaña vs Magnolia

"We shot ourselves on the foot in that game," he said. "I don't know what happened. I guess we lacked preparation mentally. That's why I've been telling my team that nobody's sure in this league."

While Montaña guns for a share of second spot, Rain or Shine and Hapee-PCU will be shooting for the same goal in their 2 p.m. tussle.

Granny Goose holds a second-best 5-3 record.

Coach Robert Sison expects a tight contest since his Jewels and the Wizards boast the most seasoned lineups in the league.

"It's going to be tough against Magnolia." said Sison, who has been banking on the steady performances of Alex Compton and Al Magpayo. "But in our team, you don't know who will step up."

Last Sunday, Reed Juntilla starred for the Jewels as he shot 11 of his 19 points in the fourth quarter for a 69-63 win over Harbour Centre.

Jeff Chan also upstaged Magnolia stars Arwind Santos and Kelly Williams last Saturday as he scored the clutch baskets in the Wizards' 69-65 win versus Granny Goose. *Jasmine W. Payo*

COCA-COLA strongman **Ali Peek** collars the rebound off **Air21's Patrick Fran** during their game at the Cuneta Astrodome yesterday. RUDY ESPERAS

Express tame Tigers, gain share of 4th

GAME TODAY (*Balanga, Bataan*)
4:30 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs Alaska
GAMES TOMORROW (Ynares Center)
4:10 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Sta. Lucia Realty
6:40 p.m.—Purefoods vs Air21

By June Navarro

RANIDEL DE OCAMPO IS slowly encroaching on Renren Ritualo's territory.

De Ocampo fired four three-pointers and scored a personal-high 28 points to help Air21 subdue Coca-Cola, 98-94, last night in the San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Renren Ritualo added 15 points, Wynne Arboleda chipped in 14 while Shawn Daniels had 12 points and 11 assists for the Express, who improved to 8-7 and tied Red Bull in fourth place.

Coach Bo Perasol, however, paid tribute to the Express' stingy full-court press than their exploits on the offensive end.

"I was so cautious that our defense would crumble just like what happened against Red Bull," said Perasol, whose Express still have a mathematical chance of securing an outright semifinal berth should they beat Purefoods in their final assignment.

San Miguel Beermen escaped with an 86-78 win over Barangay Ginebra in the other game for its fifth straight victory, the longest win streak in the conference.

Looking to advance to the quarterfinals without a hitch, the Beermen moved out of the cellar and improved to 6-8 with two games left before ending their classification-round stint.

The Kings, who missed Eric Menk due to a disciplinary action, lost their third straight and fell to 7-7. Menk failed to attend the Kings' practice Thursday and was suspended for a game.

Though the Tigers still have a shot at an automatic quarterfinal seat, they seem bound to kiss their semifinal bid goodbye.

The scores:

First Game

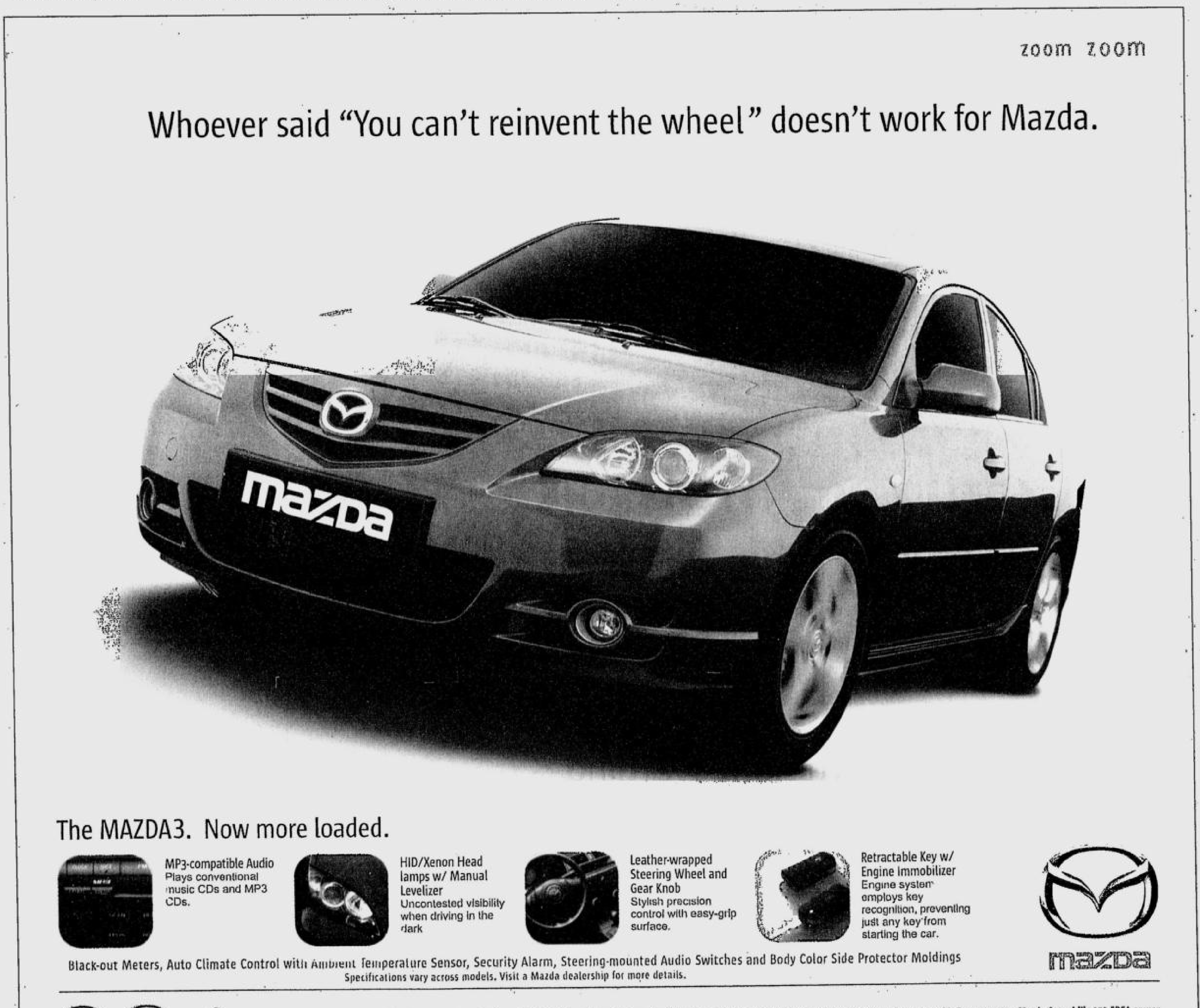
AIR21—De Ocampo 28, Ritualo 15, Arboleda 14, Daniels 12, Ferriols 7, Canaleta 6, David 5, De Ocampo 4, Gonzales 3, Se 2, Fran 2, Tubid 0.

COCA-COLA 94—Thomas 24, Peek 20, Arigo 20, Singson 11, Mamaril 6, Reavis 5, Espinosa 3, Antonio 3, Miranda 2.

Quarters: 30-20, 54-45, 72-73, 98-94.

Reaching out to inmates

THE PHILIPPINE BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION (PBA) is holding a unique Christmas outreach program by staging a mini-basketball tournament inside the National Bilibid Prison (NBP). The project, set on Monday, is dubbed "Two Ball Challenge ng mga Astig," with selected players from the nine PBA squads teaming up with inmates at the NBP and playing in a game with special mechanics. Former PBA venue announcer Dennis Cerdeña, a current inmate at the NBP, helped arranged the breakthrough event. "For a change, we opted to bring the PBA to the National Bilibid Prison (NBP) to give joy to our brother inmates in this time of the holiday season by allowing them to see their favorite basketball players in person," said commissioner Noli Eala.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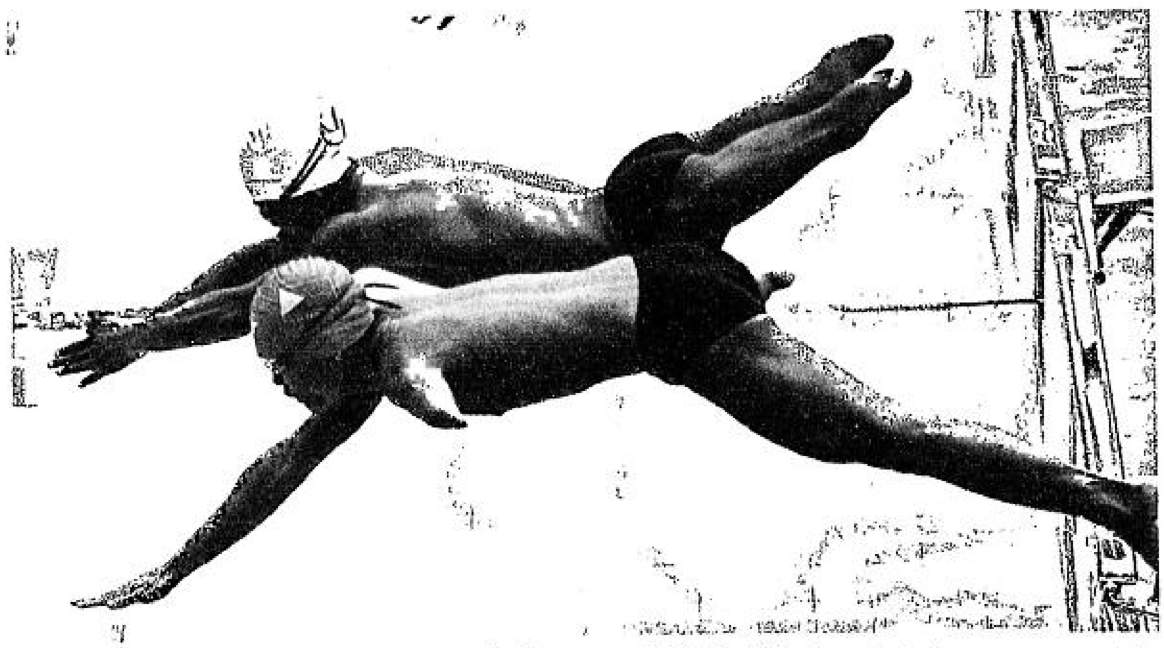
RP chessers nail 3 golds

By Jasmine W. Payo



NOEL Gonzales (foreground) on his way to the bronze medal in the 100m breaststroke. RYAN LIM

THE PHILIPPINES STRUCK FOR four gold medals in the 3rd Asean Para Games yesterday, including three in chess at the GSIS gymnasium in Pasay City.

FIDE Master Sander Severino led the golden splurge in chess even as Arnel Aba clinched the Philippines' first gold in swimming on Thursday night at the Rizal Memorial pool.

Thailand continued to dominate the competition, posting a 24-15-7 gold-silver-bronze medal tally after dominating second-day action in athletics and swimming. Malaysia was second with a 19-7-4 haul, while Vietnam stood third at 14-4-2.

The Philippines was running seventh in the 11-nation field with a 4-6-6 tally.

Severino, a polio-stricken chesser from Negros Occidental, scored a perfect five points to beat Le Hua Binh of Vietnam in the physically handicapped individual event.

He copped his second gold after teaming up with National Master Henry Lopez and Alexis Elinor in the physically handicapped team event.

The trio collected 12 points, four points ahead of Malaysia. Vietnam took the bronze with 7.5 points.

Francis Ching, Elmar Olivar and Rudy Sarmiento completed the three-gold romp after earning 10.5 points in the blind team event. Malaysia settled for silver with 9.5 points, while Vietnam got the bronze with 7.

Aba clinched RP's first gold Thursday in the 200-meter backstroke in the visually impaired class with a time of 3 minutes 06.41 seconds.

"I'm proud of the boys, we're making it up (for RP) here," said chess team coach Grandmaster Joey Antonio, noting that chess suffered a gold-medal shutout in the recent Southeast Asian Games.

Lopez also claimed a silver in the physically handicapped event after drawing with Vietnam's Nguyen Le Phuc with 4.5 points. *With a report from Marlon Bernardino*

PSC to shoulder Philsoc payables

By Musong R. Castillo

THE PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMMISSION will take care of most of the expenses incurred by the Philippine Southeast Asian Games Organizing Committee (Philsoc) in Cebu, Bacolod and Manila.

An unimpeachable PSC source, who spoke on condition of anonimity, told the INQUIRER that the government sports agency will foot the bill, which another source said is estimated to be about P100 million.

"Like someone coming to a brother's aid, the PSC will shoulder most of the bills," the source said. "The hotels will be paid for by the PSC, *amin na 'yun* (they're on us), but the Philsoc will have to reimburse us for some of the other (payables).

"Damage control ito. *Sayang kasi ang* success."

The source said that PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez has given the go-signal to work on the financial aid, which will be given out early next week.

Ramirez, however, refused to comment on the matter when contacted by the INQUIRER.

Hotel owners in Cebu and Bacolod are demanding that the Philsoc settle millions of pesos in unpaid bills, an obligation which president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, also the Philippine Olympic Committee head, said his agency would pay for.

"We will match payables with collectibles," Philsoc chair Robert Aventajado said. "We are hoping that the POC can still make money out of it.

"I think, Mr. Cojuangco ... has to be congratulated for being very creative and coming up with strategies as to how we could stretch the peso."

"I cannot understand why are they making something big out of nothing," Cojuangco said during the Scoop sa Kamayan forum yesterday.

Cojuangco said Bacolod Rep. and Philsoc vice chair Monico Puentevella will take care of all the problems in his hometown and in Cebu.

Cebu and Bacolod have combined collectibles of P23 million from the Philsoc, while Manila companies and establishments are seeking P73 million in unpaid bills.

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Nat'l Duathlon gets going at Clark Sunday

ALL IS SET FOR THE CLARK NATIONAL Duathlon Championships this Sunday with close to 300 athletes from all over Luzon and Metro Manila expected to be at the starting line in front of the Clark Expo.

Defending champion Ryan Mendoza, who has been unbeatable in all major local duathlon races in the country, is the odds-on favorite in the event hosted by the Clark Development Corp.

But this time, Triathlon Association of the Philippines (TRAP) president Tom Carrasco expects a more exciting race.

Expected to challenge Mendoza are Jeffrey Valdez and Fil-Am Arland Macasieb, a bronze medalist in the recent 23rd SEA Games.

Local organizer Melvin Fausto said other elite athletes will be seeking slots in the national duathlon team that will represent the country in the 2006 Asian Duathlon Championship which the Philippines is also hosting next year at Clark.

Among those who have registered are former Tour cyclists Joseph Millanes and Augusto Benedicto, and Naga City's Franklin Peñalosa, said Fausto.

Aside from the standard distance race, the event, also supported by Speedo, Gatorade, Yokohama Tire Phils., NANOX Phils., Ametron Inc., Tokumi Electronics, J&K Golf Training Center, Clark Pipeline Depot, and Phil. Shin-ei Inc., will also feature a junior sprint, an Executive sprint, and a CILA sprint relay team event.

Other event sponsors are Pacific East Asia Cargo, Asian Spirit and Agrifruit Freezing.

SPORTSWATCH

Makati cockfest Rd. 3 today

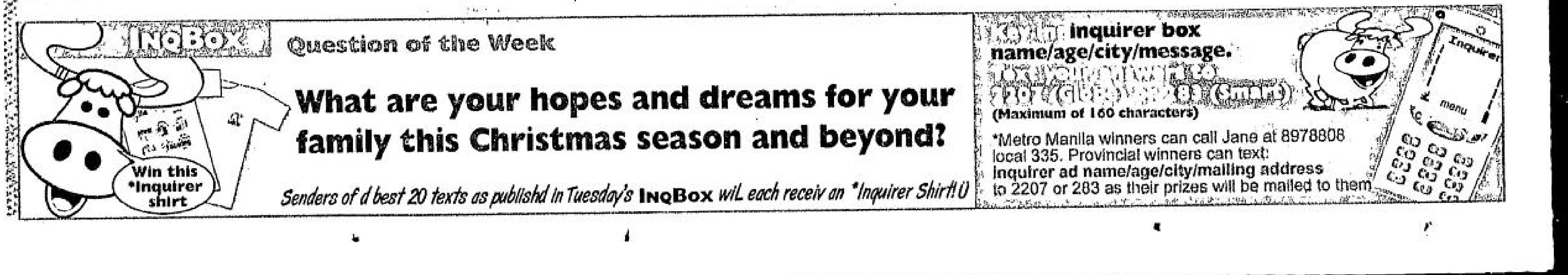
BIG-TIME cockfighting resumes today as the third round eliminations of Pamaskong Salpukan 6-Cock Derby gets under way at Makati Coliseum with 60 fights on tap. The early pacesetters, with three wins each, are Boy Javier and Carrie Chua (April 21 Pasay), J. Diokno (RCD San Luis) and Butchoy Olano (Ika Mae Jan. 6 Pasay). With 2.5 points are entries Bacolor Gold, Spartan's Fire and Anteus. As an early Christmas gift of WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp., paying patrons may buy their tickets on a "buy- one, take –one" basis. Promoters are Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co. Call 896 -3545 and 895 -6475.

SJC derby finals today

THE SHOWDOWN of upcoming cockers and backyard breeders continues today when the blockbuster Daytime 4-Cock Derby championship round blasts off at San Juan Coliseum with Sagupaan Complexor 3000 as sponsor. More than 150 fights are scheduled beginning at 10 a.m., said host Aba Badiola. Aside from the P1 million guaranteed prize, also at stake is an owner-type jeep (for the fastest win champion). Up next at SJC on Dec. 19 and 21, is the National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-cock derby (second leg), with Gov. Ito Ynares and Richard Bates as hosts. NCA has also scheduled another 7-cock event on Jan. 8 and 11 with Sundance Group of Danny Valero and Phil Say as promoters. For inquiries, call 7255369.

Fastest Win tilt in Antipolo

THE NEWLY opened Antipolo Coliseum in Antipolo City, now under the management of TJ Marquez of Texas Group, will hold the Fastest Win One–Cock Ulutan on Dec. 21. The overall champion will receive P30,000. Prizes also await the second to 15th placers. Entry fee is P1,000. The fastest win champion, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., will get a bonus of P10,000; second, P5,000 and third, P2,000. Marquez said that regular hackfights are set every Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.



INQBOX Question of the Week

What are your hopes and dreams for your family this Christmas season and beyond?

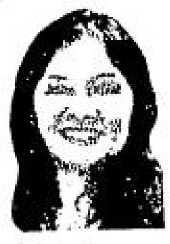
Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's INQBOX wiL each receiv an *Inquirer Shirt!

inquirer box name/age/city/message.
(Maximum of 160 characters)

*Metro Manila winners can call Jane at 8978808 local 335. Provincial winners can text:
inquirer ad name/age/city/mailing address to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them.

Fund-raiser set for PBL's Maniego

IN HUDDLE



Beth Celis

FOUND SOMEthing interesting on the Internet the other day: a list of the Fiba's (international basketball federation) top 75 countries.

I don't know exactly how the rankings were arrived at, but as expected, the US is on top of the list, with Yugoslavia coming close at second.

And what about the Philippines?

For sure it's nowhere near the US or Yugoslavia, but at least we're in the top 75.

We're No. 65! Just a few notches ahead of countries like Sweden, Portugal, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, among others.

I was in such a hurry, I failed to note how Asian powers like China and South Korea ranked. Will get back to the item soon, so I can give you more interesting data.

* * *

About a week ago, player agent Mike Gonzalez sent me a text message from Los Angeles announcing the expected arrival in Manila of import Kevin Freeman.

Mike said Freeman was due in Manila Dec. 7 and was playing for a team ranked in the lower five in the PBA standings.

According to Mike, Kevin's mission is to bring back life into this squad.

"He is so focused with this mission he promised he won't see his old flame—actress Jackie Forster—to avoid distraction. We shall see if he can resist her," Mike texted.

What puzzles me is that there's no sign of Freeman anywhere in the PBA. And he was supposed to have arrived in Manila when Mike texted.

Whatever happened to him, I wonder.

The team he was supposed to play for is currently doing very well. He could either be on standby, or he could have been sent back to the United States.

* * *

Friends of the PBL's Butch Maniego have planned a fund-raising event for him on Dec. 27, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Sports Kamp at The Fort in Taguig City.

Everyone is invited.

"Give-what-you-can *ito*. Any amount will help. May game at 5 p.m., and after that, *konting tsibug*. More details to follow," read the text message from Butch's friend.

The revenue generated will be used to defray the medical expenses of Butch who is due for a kidney transplant.

Butch is suffering from a condition called last-stage renal failure and is currently undergoing dialysis three times a week.

* * *

With the success of the Filipino athletes in the recently concluded Southeast Asian Games, I asked national training director Mike Keon if he now has a basis for predicting how we would fare in the coming Asian Games.

Mike's forecast in the SEAG had been so accurate, there was no better source.

This time, Mike was non-committal. He said it would depend entirely on the support the athletes would get from the government and the private sector.

We were of course talking about logistics.

* * *

For a while there, my scribe friend said he thought he pressed the wrong buttons and got a wrong number.

He was calling BAP secretary general Graham Lim on the cell phone to inquire about his deportation case, but the ringtone he was hearing wasn't Graham's tone.

After a while, he heard a familiar voice on the other end of the line. It was Graham.

"Are you trying to send a message across with your new ringtone?" the scribe asked Graham.

It was the "Pinoy Big Brother" theme, "Pinoy Ako."

FG rewards SEAG heroes with HK trip

KEEPING HIS PROMISE, FIRST GENTLEMAN Mike Arroyo is rewarding more than 200 athletes and sports officials with a three-day Christmas vacation in Hong Kong for giving the Philippines its first overall championship in the recent Southeast Asian Games.

The 23rd SEAG gold medalists and sports officials, including Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez, will be leaving for Hong Kong on Monday.

"This is a good Christmas gift to all the athletes who helped us win our first overall SEA Games title," said Ramirez. "The First Gentleman has fulfilled his promise and I'm happy about it.

A total of 205 SEAG gold medalists—39 from traditional boat race men and women teams, 18 from men's baseball, 34 from men and women's softball teams, 10 from wushu, 7 from aquatics, 9 from athletics, 8 from archery, 7 from arnis, 5 from billiards, 10 from boxing, 2 each from cycling and bodybuilding, 3 from dancesport, 10 from taekwondo, one each from sailing, pencak silat, gymnastics, lawn ball and equestrian—will be enjoying the Hong Kong trip.

The athletes joining the trip will get $300 pocket money from the First Gentleman fund.

TOP seed Chung Hee-seok of South Korea returns to his Filipino rival Johnny Arcilla, who eventually quit in the second set due to a foot injury. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

PJ, Korean in title clash

Injuries take out Arcilla, Tierro's PCA Open semifinal foe

By Marc Anthony Reyes

INJURY DECIDED THE FATE OF THE TOP FILIPINO bets in the men's singles semifinals yesterday of the PCA Open tennis championships.

The Philippines' No. 1 Patrick John Tierro gained a finals seat when his injured Korean foe called it quits, while a swollen ankle finally ended the campaign of Johnny Arcilla who gave up in favor of South Korea's defending champion Chung Hee-seok.

In what became the shortest day at the PCA shell courts, Tierro advanced when the third-seeded Seo Yung Bum abandoned the match due to a back injury while trailing 0-2 in the first set.

Chung took some time to reach the finals as Arcilla battled on despite a hurting heavily bandaged foot before calling it a day while trailing 3-6, 0-4.

Arcilla sprained his ankle Thursday in his quarterfinal meeting against Rolando Ruel Jr. but gamely stood his ground in the first set against the 30-year-old Korean.

"I gave it all I had," said Arcilla, 25, the 2001 winner who led 3-2 in the first set but soon fell victim to Chung's wily groundstrokes which eventually defanged the former RP No. 1.

Tierro, the 20-year-old pride and hope of Philippine tennis, said he already noticed Bum writhing in pain during their warmup. He still expressed surprise when the Korean walked out before the third game of the first set.

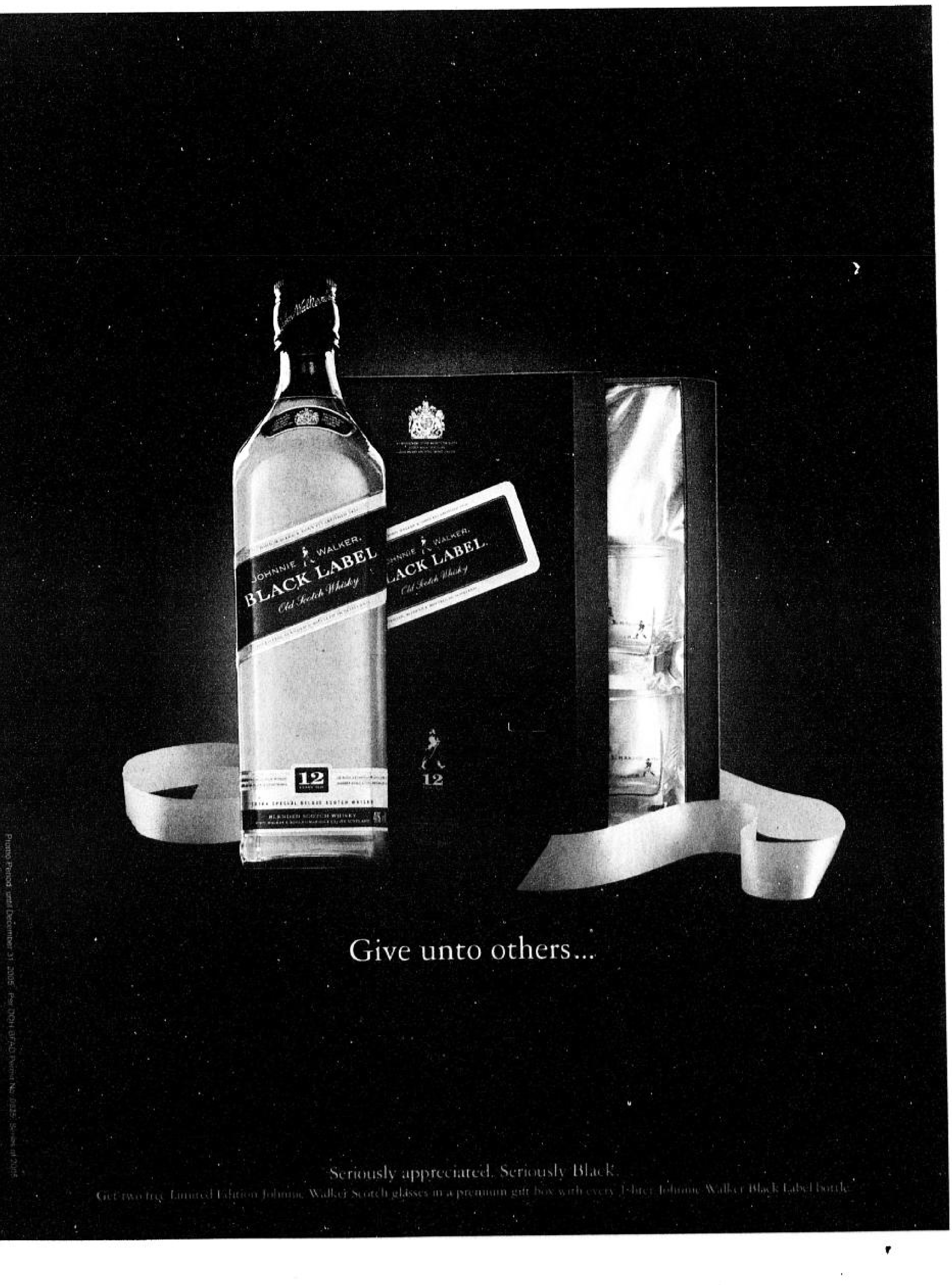
Tierro and Chung slug it out for the title and the P80,000 top purse at 9 a.m. tomorrow in this tournament presented by Basilan Gov. Muslim "Wahab" Akbar and sponsored by Solar Sports, Accel, PVL Restaurant-Little Lawrence, Philippine Star, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Sun Village, Las Palmas, Powerade, Coca-Cola, Stronghold Insurance, San Miguel Brewery, Maresa Creative Group, Cel Consuledator, PMS Ship Agency, MILS, Equitable-PCI, Burlington, Dunlop and Pixel Project.

"I feel very confident (against Seok)," said Tierro, who quit his studies at De La Salle University to concentrate on competing abroad. "He's experienced but I'm playing okay, too."

He saw action in at least 10 international tournaments this year. He was in India during last year's PCA Open, which Chung won for the second straight year.

"Of course, I'm going all-out to win the title," said Tierro, who is expected to lean on his vaunted power game against the experienced Korean. "I hope my service percentage will be high."

Meanwhile, PCA ran away with the Accel ladies team tennis championships over at Eusebio Tennis Club. Alabang Country Club settled for third place.



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Putra Cuppers halve Malaysia's lead to 9

MICHAEL BIBAT FIRED A 2-UNDER-PAR 70 and Juvic Pagunsan shot a 71 as the Philippines reduced Malaysia's 18-stroke lead to nine after the third round of the Putra Cup at the Pun Hlaing Golf Club in Myanmar Friday.

Jay Bayron's 73 completed the Philippines' 214 output for the day, giving the Southeast Asian Games champion a 54-hole aggregate of 652.

After stringing superb rounds of 209 and 211, Malaysia skidded with a 223 for 643, enabling second-running Thailand to move within four strokes heading into the last 18 holes of the event also known as the Southeast Asian Golf Team Championships.

BEST RP SCORER: Michael Bibat

The Filipino golfers, whose trip here is sponsored by golf patron Ricky Razon and under the auspices of the National Golf Association of the Philippines, remained in third.

Thailand, bannered by teener Anujit Hirunratanakorn, matched the Philippines' 2-under par effort of 214 for a 647, setting the stage for a final-round shootout between two teams which the Filipino golfers dominated in the recent SEA Games back home in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Having chopped a big hunk off Malaysia's lead, the Philippines remained hopeful of pulling off a big comeback, although it would hinge on Pagunsan's ability to flash the form that won him the SEAG individual gold medal.

Pagunsan didn't count in the second round with a 76.

Bibat, the former Singapore Amateur Open champion, must also sustain the momentum of his big round yesterday, and Bayron or Marvin Dumandan should step up to give the team the needed push.

Dumandan failed to get into the scoring act Friday with a 74.

Suarez lifts Chairman's Cup

Turns back TBAM-Prima's Tuazon in high-scoring finale

FORMER WORLD CUP CHAMPION CJ Suarez outclassed TBAM-Prima's Vlad Tuazon in their championship showdown to rule the 2nd Chairman's Cup at the PowerBowl Bowling Center at the Rockwell Center in Makati City recently.

Suarez, who won a gold medal in the men's doubles with Ernie Gatchalian in the recent Southeast Asian Games, prevailed in the thrilling duel, scoring a near-perfect 299 in the first game against Tuazon's 251.

Tuazon fought back in the second game with a 264, but Suarez was not to be denied as he closed out with a string of strikes to pip him with a 267-game.

Suarez won the two-game duel, 566-515, and took home the champion's purse of P100,000.

Tuazon, who finished 1st and 2nd in the last two tournaments at the venue prior to the Chairman's Cup, settled for P50,000 in the tournament hosted by Rockwell Land Corp. chair Manuel M. Lopez and sponsored by Euromed, Bevida, Ebu Property Holding Inc., Lanting Security, Jocelyn Forge Inc. and Teh Hsin Enterprise Phils. Corp.

BIG WINNERS: From left, Carlos Minana, Tony Ayson and CJ Suarez with Rockwell chair and tournament host Manuel Lopez

Suarez secured the first finals berth by downing TBAM-Prima's Carlo Mansilungan (246-238, 226-195), and Tuazon clinched the other slot by outlasting PTBA-Wave-Brunswick's Joonee Gatchalian (240-248, 231-218, 220-191).

TBAM-Prima's Tony Ayson defeated former national team mainstay Rene Reyes of SJBA, 470-435, to top the Seniors division and win the P50,000 first prize. Reyes pocketed P25,000.

National team standout Cheche Abrantes of TBAM-Prima beat club teammate Arvi Vinuya, 257-232, to win the Youth division and the iPOD Photo that went with the title. Vinuya got an iPOD Nano.

Carlos Minana topped the Bumper division with a score of 126. He won a specially-designed bowling ball courtesy of PowerBowl Bowling Center.

BACK TO BACK CHAMPIONS
CKP
CONSULTANCY SERVICES
The People You Want To Know

2005 GILLETTE MBL VECTOR CUP
OPEN DIVISION

CKP CONSULTANCY GILLETTE MBL VECTOR CUP OPEN CHAMPS: (Standing, L-R) William Fong (Playing team owner/manger), Jonas Guiao (Asst. coach), Morty Fong, Tim Esparaz, Jun Tanuaun, Ryan Lapid, JR Naguit, Renato Echavez (Statistician), Adonis Tierra (Playing coach); Macy Fong (jr. muse), Chelsea Ng (jr. muse), Jeff de Guzman, Paolo Malonzo (MVP) and DJ Perlas. Not in photo are Cham Alastre, Ronnie Zagala, Chestee Ng and Ryan Tan.

2005 VALLE VERDE 3 CLASSIC BASKETBALL LEAGUE

Gillette MBL Vector Cup Open Division champions **CKP CONSULTANCY SERVICES** bagged another title by routing tournament host Valle 3, 107-91, in the Open Division finals of the Valle 3 Classic basketball league at the Adidas Sports Kamp in Fort Bonifacio last Saturday. CKP swept the preliminary rounds with an 8-0 win/loss record before the finals. Members and staff of the team are (standing, L-R) Brad (utility), Ryan Tan, Morty Fong, Cham Alastre, William Ibay, Paeng Santos, Jun Tanuaun, JR Naguit, Renato Echavez (Statistician), Adonis Tierra (Head coach), Jun Arquero, William Fong (playing team owner/manager), Jonas Guiao (Asst. coach), Oliver Agapito, Ryan Lapid; (Seated L-R) Sonny (utility), Paolo Malonzo, JV Tierra (mascot), DJ Perlas, Fernandez kids (mascots), Jeffrey De Guzman, Boyet Fernandez, Ogie Gumatay, Joel Parcotilo (trainer), Trina Mendoza, Chelsea Ng and Macy Fong (jr. muses).

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE PEOPLE WE KNOW:
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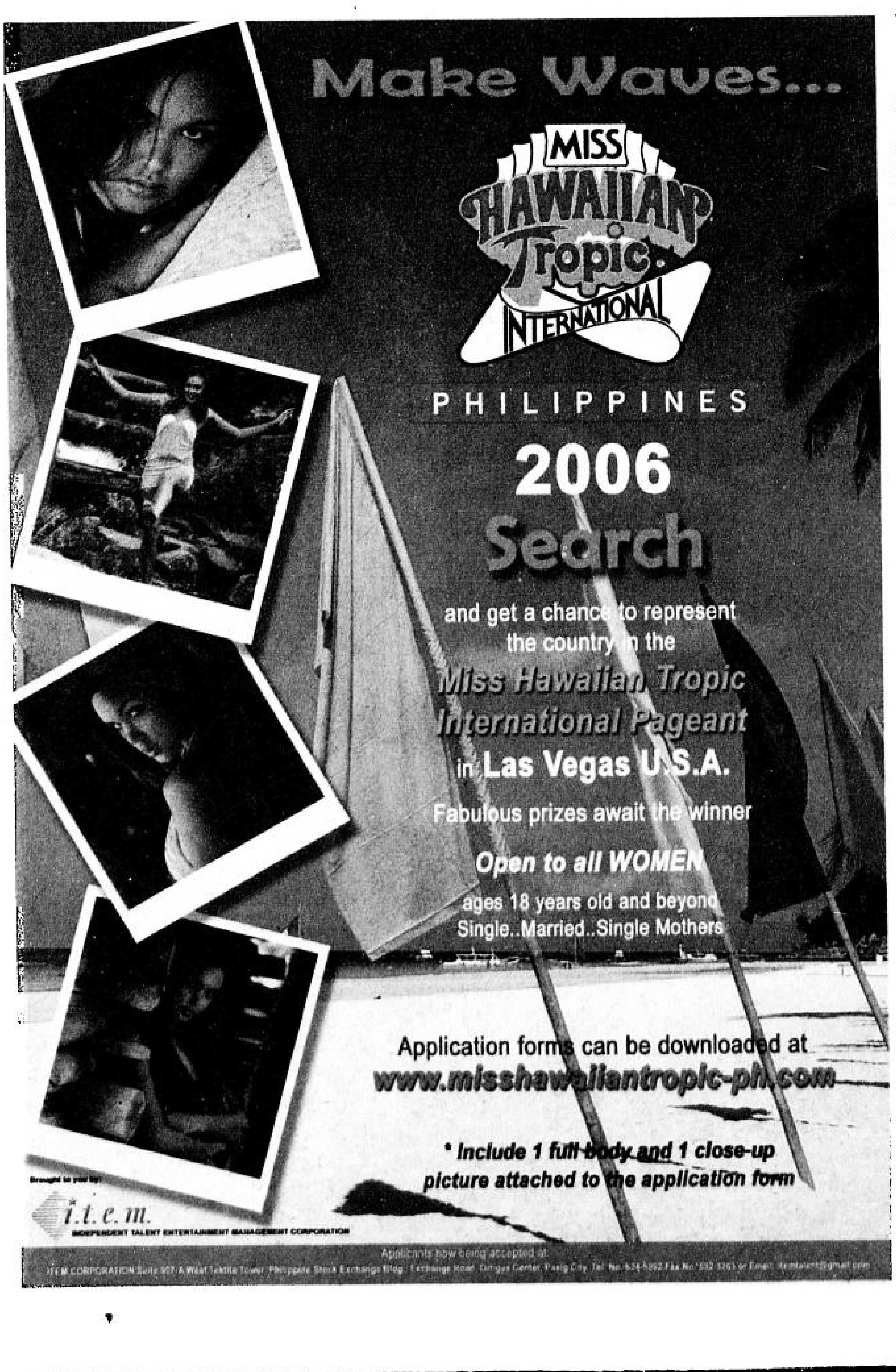

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A sport called life

By Percy D. Della

A GRITTY TEAM OF KIDS FROM THEIR VILlage has brought home medals, including three golds from Ali Atienza's Manila Youth Games National Invitational.

But don't expect most people in Tamurong Primero, Candon City, to lead a sporting life anytime soon.

They are too busy pursuing a sport called life.

Tamurong I, on the Ilocos Sur shores of the South China Sea, is a fishing barangay where most meals are still cooked with firewood or charcoal and chickens roam free.

The beach, craggy from coral, is vegetated by coconut trees, thorny romas groves and a sweet potato-like ground cover with purple blooms that lure monarch butterflies.

On the shoreline are a few Mediterranean-style houses owned by emigrants who have returned home to enjoy the fruits of their labor. Inland are dozens of concrete structures built through the remittances of overseas workers.

COMMENTARY

But 60 percent of the inhabitants still eke out an existence riding bamboo rafts to line up nets called *sigay* about 30 meters from the shore. The hope is to catch little fishes called *uwak, mulmul, barangan, birot, bayang-bayang, ar-aro* and hundreds of other species whose market value, not their scientific names, matters.

Fishermen more blessed than others cut across the waters in rainbow-colored and motorized canoes called *bilog* towards a fertile fishing ground a few miles out to sea. The place abound with swordfish, flying fish, assorted tuna varieties; but intrepid fishers long for their own epic encounters with the dorado and the blue marlin, called *susay* in the Ilocano dialect.

Morning's first light usually shines on women and children, as they sit on a fallen coconut tree, with the easy banter of baseball players in a dugout. But small talk will soon turn to nervous anticipation, as the rafts and the boats return to shore.

A night of fishing could be boom or bust. A gambler might lay odds against the fisherman with the least catch not to fish again another day. But he is more resilient than he looks and barring some weather, will be the first out to sea tonight.

The South China Sea has witnessed the meaning and challenges of life in this quarter of the globe. The people of Tamurong want their waters unspoiled and their way of life unchanged. They would not want to wake up someday to find haphazard development in their backyards.

That's why the village looks down on strangers with Chamber of Commerce attitude.

The presence of a government survey party raised hackles the other day. As transits were trained outside private property toward the water, people wondered aloud if G-men were out to write the area's obituary.

There is talk about a baywalk or some other tourist trap from Barangay Darapidap in the south up to the town of San Esteban northward.

Government authorities may applaud the proposal as a tourism model for the region. But Tamurong's disdain for such a plan is a familiar story of seaside residents around the islands who fear for the death of open space and their way of life.

The basketball goal dangling between coconut trees has attracted a crowd of Tamurong High School students on lunch break.

As the boys start to shoot baskets, fishermen walk the shores groping for *maritangtang* (sea urchins).

A sport called life continues in Tamurong Primero.

Sports note: It's been Rodolfo "Boy" Pascua's wish to travel to his sweetheart's home in Siargao Island to see her and meet the family. But Pascua, a struggling Tamurong fisherman does not have the means for such a trans-island venture. Can Surigao Congressman Butch Pichay, a bud from Serafin Letim's farm in Sacramento and PAL's Rollie Estabillo help in this matter of the heart? Please call or text 0918-6244923.

'No manipulations in SEAG archery'

THERE WERE NO SCORE MANIPULATIONS in favor of the Philippines in the archery competition of the recent Southeast Asian Games.

This was stressed by the chair of the Judge Commission, Sergio Font A. Milian of Cuba and a member of his group, judge Elsie Luk of Hong Kong to prove that the Philippines won the men's recurve team gold medal fairly.

"I checked the scorecard and the scores matched the number of holes in the target aces, both for Indonesia and the Philippines," said Milian.

Milian and Luk reacted to a protest filed by Indonesia, questioning the men's team recurve scores showing a tie between the Indons and the Filipinos, which had to be resolved by a three-arrow shootoff. The Filipinos won it, 25-24.

The Philippines finished with three gold medals in the archery event held in Subic Bay.

'Right way' coach finds everything going wrong

GREENBURGH, NEW YORK—LARRY Brown sees the bad shots, awful defense, poor decisions, and hears the boos from a lot of frustrated fans at Madison Square Garden.

"This is much more difficult right now than I ever imagined," the New York Knicks coach said on Thursday.

More than a quarter of the way through his first season in charge of his hometown team, the man who preaches doing things the right way is stuck with a bunch of players doing just about everything wrong.

New York has lost four in a row, falling to a 6-15 record heading into Friday's game at Atlanta. Worse, after playing well during a recent trip out West, the Knicks haven't been competitive in two games since returning home.

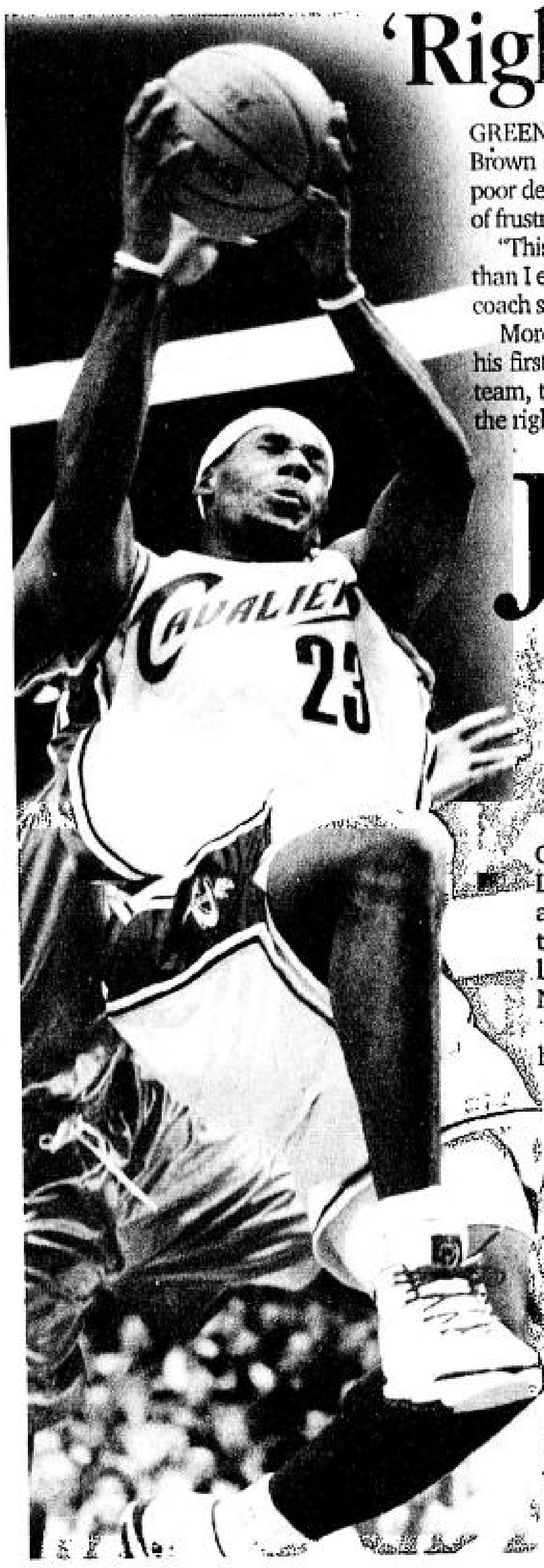
"We're just not doing it," Brown said. "We're not matching the energy of our opponent. We're doing the same things we've done all year. We turn the ball over too much [and] don't make simple plays."

Never was that more evident than recently. In double-digit home losses to the Milwaukee Bucks and Orlando Magic, the Knicks committed 38 turnovers—they rank last in the league in that category—and left shooters wide open while struggling to defend pick-and-rolls. Milwaukee and Orlando combined for 23 3-pointers.

"They had like miscommunication out there. They didn't help each other," Orlando's Hedo Turkoglu said after the Magic's 105-90 victory on Wednesday.

Brown isn't the only New Yorker tired of the lapses. The Knicks were booed during both games.

"I don't tune them out at all," Brown said. "I hear it all. I'm embarrassed. I know how much they love basketball and love this team and want us to do well. And when we play poorly, I hear it, and it kills me because I'm responsible." *AP*



BRUISED and all, LeBron James still comes up strong for Cleveland. AP

James ends Cavs' slide

CLEVELAND—A BANGED-UP LeBron James scored 26 points and got enough help from his teammates to lead the Cleveland Cavaliers past the Denver Nuggets 94-85 on Thursday.

James bruised his left shin and hobbled to the locker room with 29 seconds left in the first half. He came back with the shin wrapped for support.

He also got support from Damon Jones and Donyell Marshall. Jones scored 17 points and Marshall 11. Both hit big 3-pointers as the Cavaliers ended a three-game losing streak.

Carmelo Anthony, coming off a career-high 42 points in a win over Charlotte on Tuesday night, scored 23 to lead Denver but shot just 8-of-23. The Nuggets played without Marcus Camby, inactive with a sprained right pinkie finger.

James, who had nine assists, ended a stretch of six games with 30 or more points. That could be good news for the Cavaliers, who went 1-5 with James carrying the load during that stretch.

In Minneapolis, Michael Finley scored 21 points, including the last six for San Antonio, to help the Spurs hold off Minnesota, 90-88.

Kevin Garnett got the best of Tim Duncan with 24 points and a season-high 21 rebounds, but the Timberwolves dropped their third straight game when Troy Hudson's off-balance, running jumper in traffic at the buzzer fell short.

Duncan had 13 points and nine rebounds, missing four of his seven free-throw attempts. He was 5-for-20 from the foul line in his previous two games.

The Spurs, who improved to 18-4, are 16-0 when they shoot 45 percent or better from the field.

In Seattle, Tracy McGrady took over down the stretch, scoring 14 of his 34 points in the fourth quarter, and Houston won its fifth straight by beating the SuperSonics, 104-98. *AP*

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'Legend' gets going

THE FIFTH LEGEND TEE GOLF tournament fires off today at the Subic Bay Golf & Country Club with a brand new BMW One Series car worth P1.6M from Malayan Insurance and Legend International Resorts Ltd. (LIRL) staked as prize for a hole-in-one.

Former President Fidel V. Ramos, SBMA chair Feliciano Salonga and LIRL's Khoo Boo Boon will hit the ceremonial drive to kick off the one-day tournament, a two-man team event to be played under the modified scramble format.

Cash prizes worth P500,000 from UCPB Gen and P50,000 from MAA Assurance Company will also be given to players who will score an ace on top of the trophies, casino chips and memberships to the local hotel chain's Legendary Gold Club for division championships.

The event actually kicked off last night with cocktails for all tournament participants.

Mango Tee stakes 4 cars

FOUR MITSUBISHI VEHICLES will be staked as hole-in-one prizes in the 22nd edition of the Mango Tee Invitational, the member-guest tournament of the Alabang Country Club, on Feb. 1 to 5.

Already, 640 participants have registered for this year's event which has been expanded to five days owing to the large number of entries.

Smart Communications and Pilipinas Shell have already signed up as co-presentors for the Mango Tee.

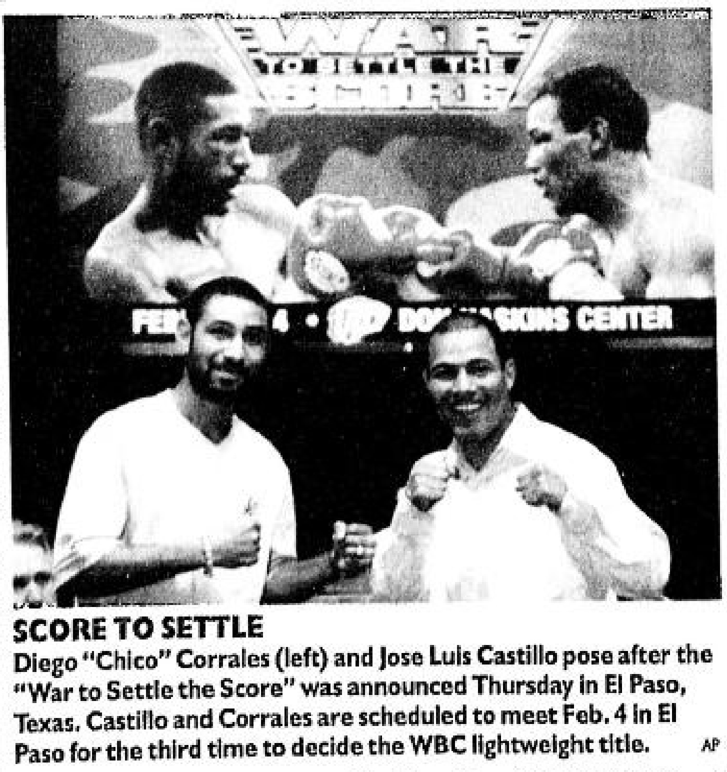
This year's tournament is one of many events leading up to the 25th anniversary celebration of the club.

Sid Diomampo, chair of the Mango Tee committee, noted that it took less than an hour for the 320 team slots to be filled up by members and their representatives. There are now 84 teams on the waiting list which is proof of the popularity of the Mango Tee.

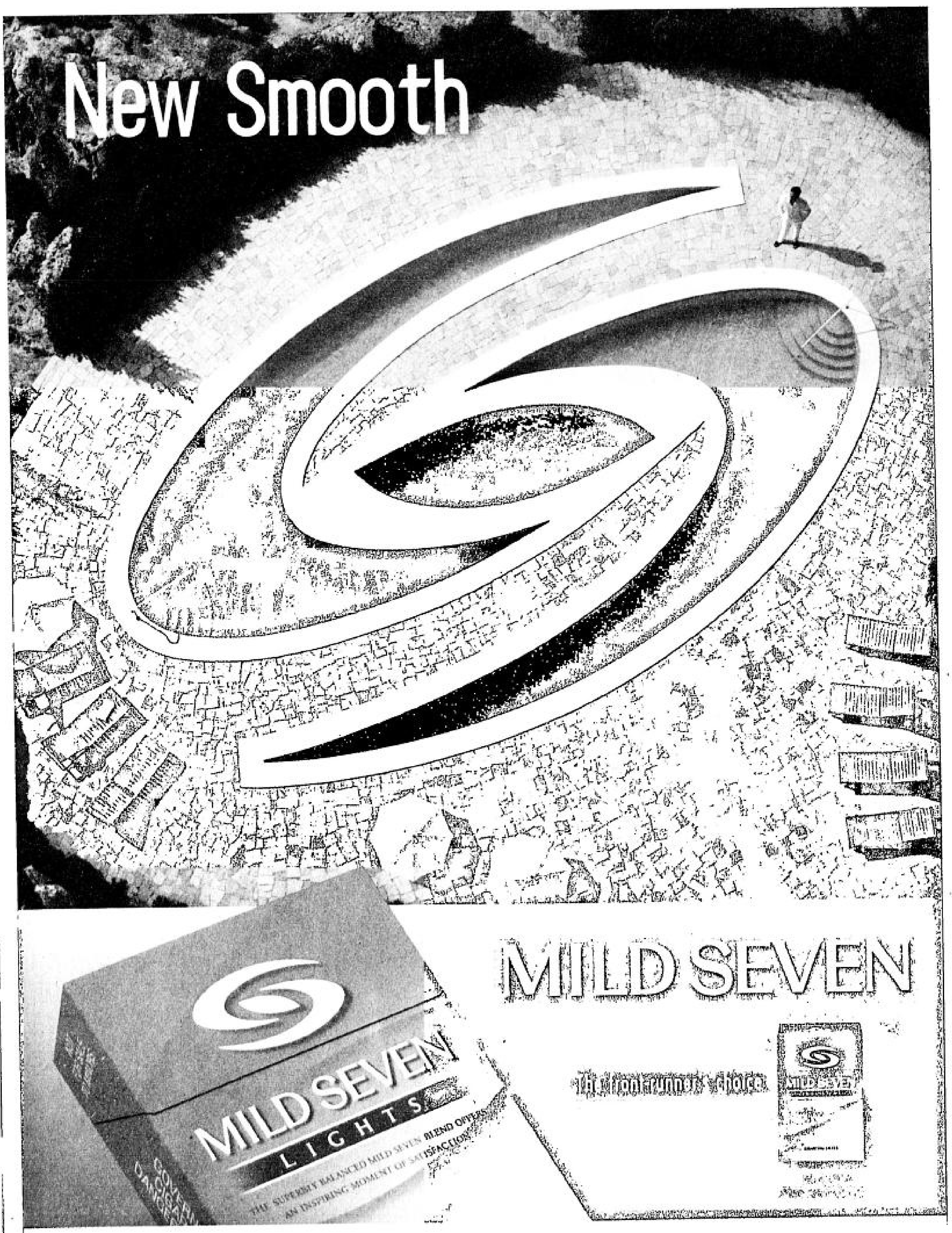
The 22nd Mango Tee will commence with the ceremonial tee-off on Jan. 30 at the ACCI course and will be capped by a grand awards night on Feb. 5 to be held at the Don Enrique Zobel ballroom.

Shoot-out final today

AFTER 20 LEGS, INCLUDING STOPS AS FAR AS VIGAN IN THE NORTH AND BICOL in the south, 40 young men will now play in the final Accel 3 Point Shoot-out Challenge today at the Ateneo Blue Eagle Gym. They are: Taffy Lim, John Marion Wilson, Jayson Pisquel, Larvin Ibo, Jaypee Beleucion, Andrei Leonel Tanlo, Arvin Braganza, Khasim Minza, Warren Madamba, Jervik Arenas, Johnny Soriano, Victor Karlo Dalisay, Roman Ferrer, Dominico Carlo Dator, Santiago Bornilla, Charlemagne Benedict Mangulabnan, Michael Francisco, Woody Co, John Patrick Umali, Dylan Ababou, Raphael Carlo Reyes, Ojie Maniquiz, Jesus Christian Cayabyab, Ernesto Urrutia, Aries Matutina, Eison Stuart Dy, Danilo Juan, Mark Saguilayan, Glenn Perlado, Denic John dela Paz, Matthew Gray Carney, Perlito Campomayor, Ronald Pacifico, Armon Corado, Gerald Cezar Chavez, Michael Garcia, Bryan Beran, Angelico Santos, Albert Weinstein and Neal Vincent Bainto.



SCORE TO SETTLE
Diego "Chico" Corrales (left) and Jose Luis Castillo pose after the "War to Settle the Score" was announced Thursday in El Paso, Texas. Castillo and Corrales are scheduled to meet Feb. 4 in El Paso for the third time to decide the WBC lightweight title. AP



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SATURDAY Special

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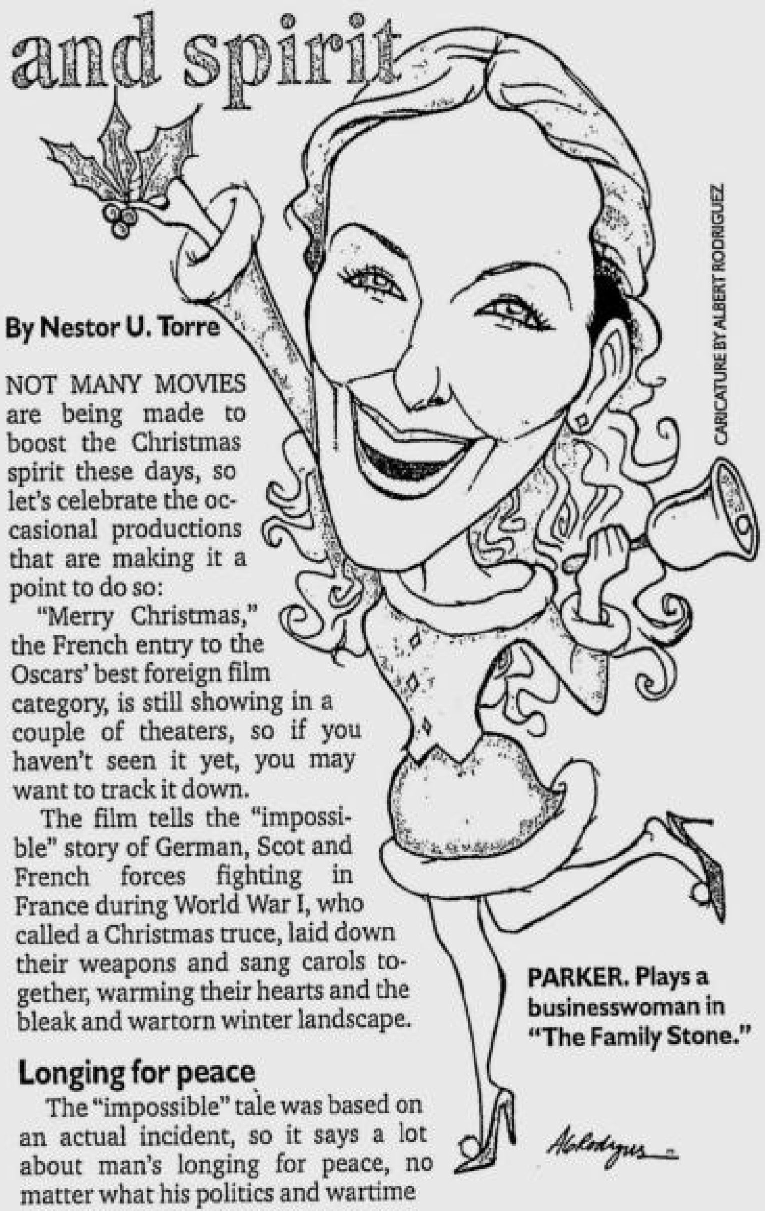
Yuletide movies warm the heart and spirit

By Nestor U. Torre


PARKER. Plays a businesswoman in "The Family Stone."

CARICATURE BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

NOT MANY MOVIES are being made to boost the Christmas spirit these days, so let's celebrate the occasional productions that are making it a point to do so:

"Merry Christmas," the French entry to the Oscars' best foreign film category, is still showing in a couple of theaters, so if you haven't seen it yet, you may want to track it down.

The film tells the "impossible" story of German, Scot and French forces fighting in France during World War I, who called a Christmas truce, laid down their weapons and sang carols together, warming their hearts and the bleak and wartorn winter landscape.

Longing for peace

The "impossible" tale was based on an actual incident, so it says a lot about man's longing for peace, no matter what his politics and wartime agenda may be. That theme makes the film perfect viewing fare on Christmas. Perhaps more theaters can show it up to Dec. 24?

On the other hand, "The Family Stone" is a romantic comedy about a Yuletide visit gone disastrously wrong. The hit comedy stars Sarah Jessica Parker as an uptight and successful businesswoman who goes on a Christmas vacation with her boyfriend's (Dermot Mulroney) quirky family.

She hopes that her boyfriend will propose to her during the visit—but, over the Stones' bodies!

Humor

The fact that all of this comic nastiness happens during the Yuletide season gives the movie's humor its unique edge.

Not really a Christmas movie *per se*, "The Chronicles of Narnia" warms the heart and spirit—that's why it's been released in the States in time for the Christmas season.

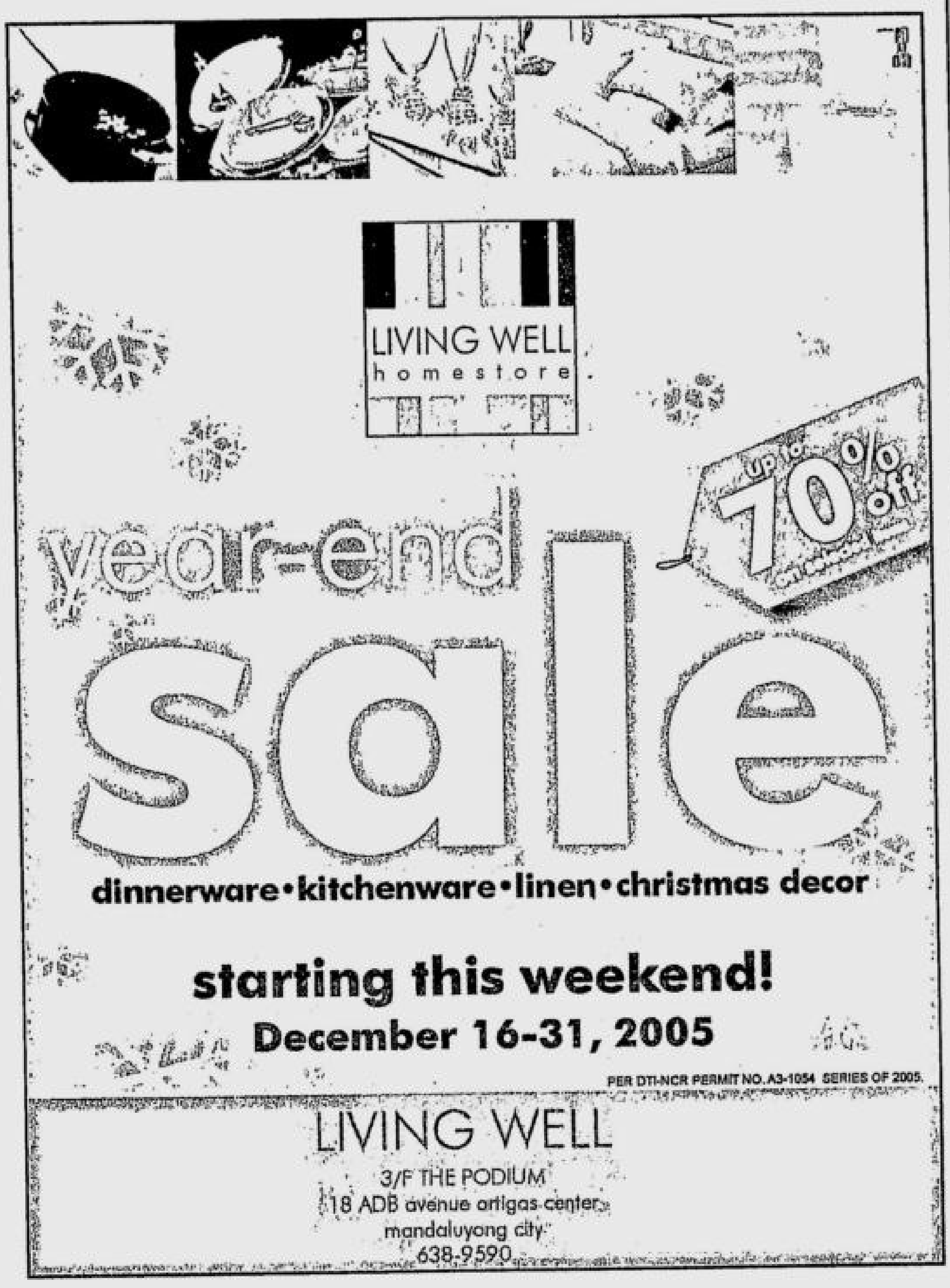
The film follows the exploits of four siblings—Lucy, Edmund, Susan and Peter Pevensie—in World War II England. They enter the world of Narnia through a magical cabinet.

Eternal winter

Once in Narnia, they discover a charming, peaceful land that has been cursed to eternal winter by the evil White Witch, Jadis.

Under the guidance of a noble and mystical ruler, the lion Aslan, the children fight to overcome the White Witch's powerful hold over Narnial.

"Narnia" has topped the US box office in a truly exceptional way, proving that upbeat, inspirational films are appreciated by viewers—especially at Christmastime! The movie opens here on Jan. 8.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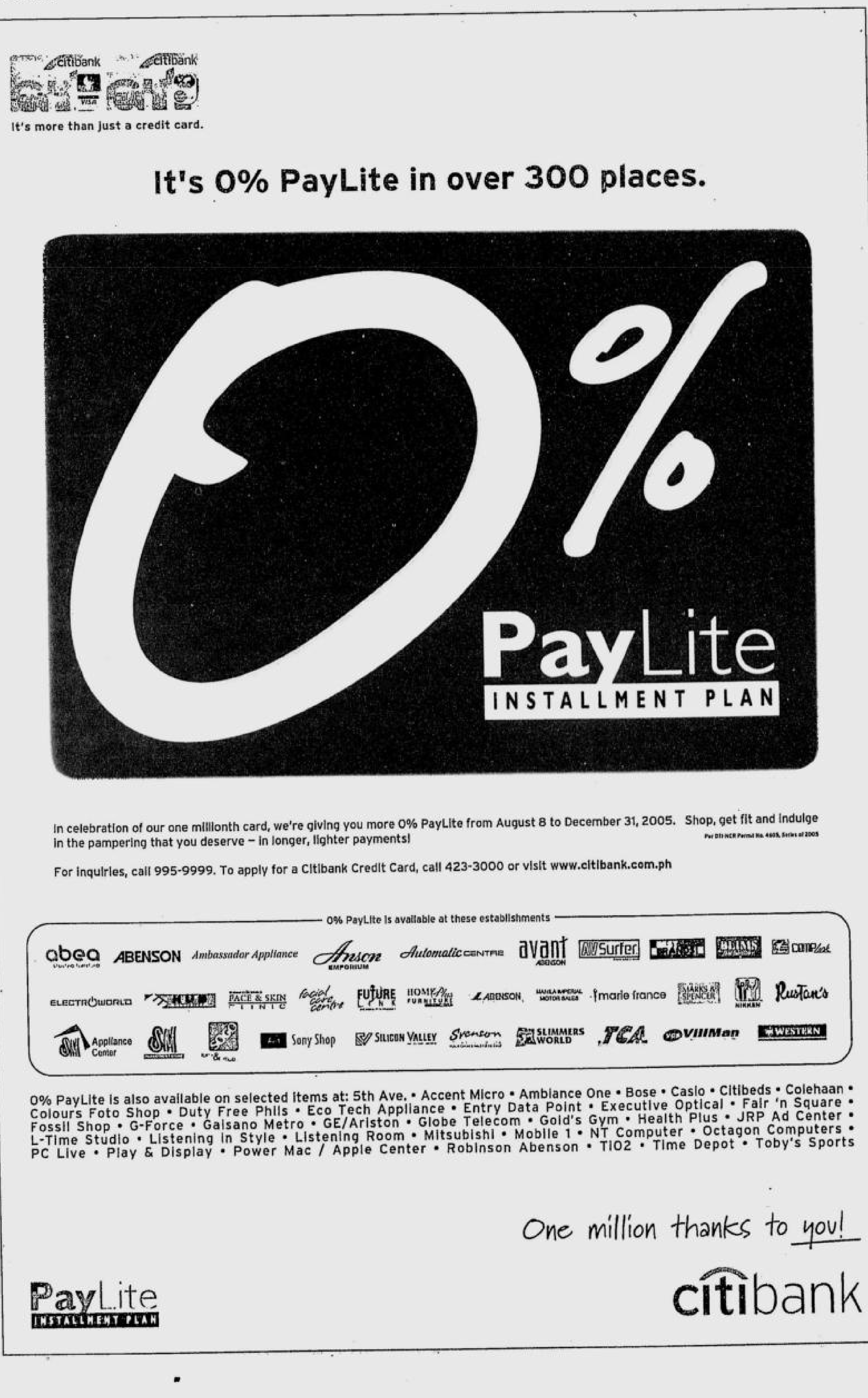
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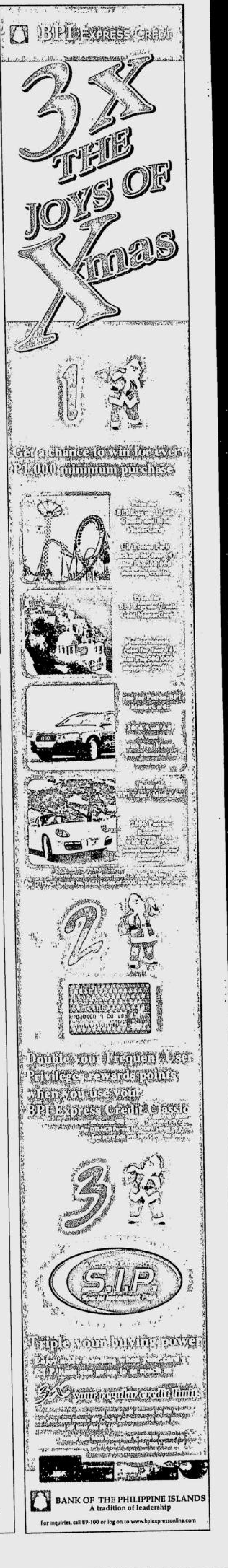
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WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

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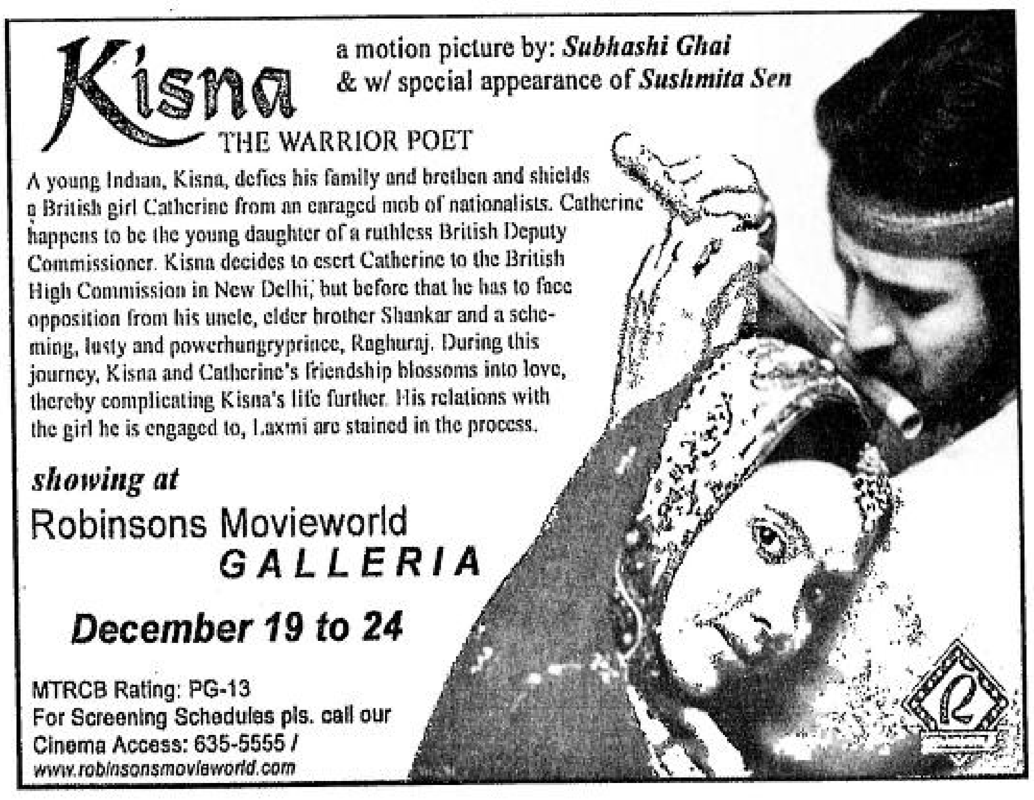
Kisna
THE WARRIOR POET
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Music scene gets boost . . .

From page A2-3

six-time platinum record, "Nina Live."

Sarah Geronimo is in third place with quintuple and double platinum records, "Popstar" and "Sweet 16." Christian Bautista attains triple-platinum status with the repackaged version of his debut album, "The Way You Look at Me."

Debut

Double-platinum awardees are Sandara Park, Hale and Kitchie Nadal for their self-titled debut albums, plus Vhong Navarro ("Totoy Bibbo"), Bamboo ("As the Music Is Playing"), Erik Santos ("This Is the Moment"), Gary Valenciano ("Gary V Greatest Hits 1 and 2), Martin Nievera ("Unforgettable/Best Wishes"), and the original soundtrack of "Pinoy Big Brother."

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Manila and Metro filmfests, then and now

By Nestor U. Torre

WHEN THE MANILA FILM FESTIVAL was launched 31 years ago, it was intended to be a showcase of the best productions that the Filipino film industry could come up with.

There was a compelling need to do this, because local movies were being roundly trounced at the box office by foreign imports, most of them from the United States.

In fact, only a few theaters screened Filipino productions, and most moviehouses preferred to show American blockbusters. To make things worse, many "educated" Filipinos looked down on local movies and thought they were *"bakya."*

Leaders

That was when film industry leaders and Manila Mayor Antonio Villegas came up with the bright idea of holding a 10-day festival, during which all of the city's moviehouses would screen only Filipino productions.

Fans of US films complained, but the daring plan was implemented. To their credit, local producers worked hard to come up with their best movies. And the first Manila Film Festival was a resounding success.

Patronage

Not only did it convince even colonial-minded viewers that local movies "deserved" their patronage, but its hefty grosses also proved to theater owners that showing Filipino productions was a good business decision.

In the following years, the Manila Film Festival helped turn the Filipino movie industry's flagging fortunes around. Many theaters opened their doors to local movies, viewers discovered that they were much more than *"bakya,"* many more Filipino films were produced, and most everyone felt happy—and vindicated!

The Manila Film Festival was so successful that it was soon decided to expand the filmfest's reach to include all of Metro Manila. Thus, the Metro filmfest was born.

Later, however, the festival "adjusted" (compromised on) its original vision of showcasing the best movies that Filipinos could produce.

Aside from quality, "star value," "commercial viability" and other factors were put into play. The Metro filmfest may still be making money, but the level of its output has gone down.

On Dec. 25, the 2005 Metro filmfest will unreel. We continue to hope that most of the official entries will be good productions, and we wish the festival well.

Commercial predisposition

At the same time, however, we're bothered by its commercial predisposition, and by the fact that it's adjusted its rules to allow multiple productions financed by one entity.

It seems to us that a proper industry showcase would require only one film per producer, so more producers and filmmakers would be given an opportunity to screen their best work.

We also note that digital filmmaking has boomed this year, so we urge the festival's organizers to launch a separate category for digital features next year.

At the moment, we have some 10 moviehouses equipped to screen digital films, and there should be even more by December 2006. So, there would be enough theaters to make the proposed digital category not just possible, but also financially rewarding for digital filmmakers. . .

Perhaps, this could be a viable compromise for the Metro filmfest starting next year: Let the main 35mm filmfest be commercial, but allow the new digital category to screen only quality productions.

What do you think?

"ENTENG Kabisote," starring Vic Sotto and Kristine Hermosa, is one of the official entries to the 2005 Metro Manila Film Festival.

Music scene gets boost from CD Lite, other innovations

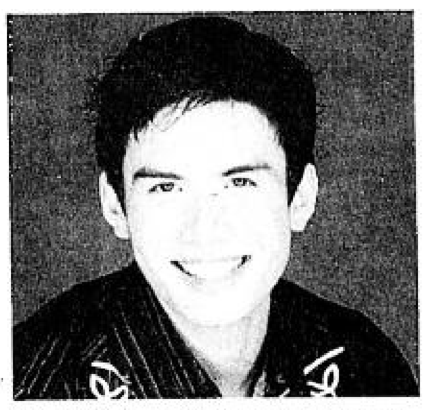
By Jocelyn Valle

THE LAST DECADE SAW GREAT ADvances in entertainment technology, including the invention of devices that can conveniently and quickly replicate images and sound. Sadly, they also adversely affected movie and music industries around the world.

The Philippines, which has for years been suffering from stiff competition from US releases, has had to absorb even more losses in revenues and, worse, consumers' confidence.

Crisis

But instead of hoisting the white flag of surrender, the entertainment sector has thought up ways not only to survive the crisis, but also to thrive in the long run. (The government has also tasked the Videogram Regulatory Board, now called Optical Media Board, to lick the recurring problem of piracy.)



BAUTISTA. His debut album has hit triple-platinum mark.

Recording companies, for instance, started slashing prices of CDs by local artists. They introduced an innovation called CD Lite, a recording that has only six tracks, to prepare the market for the phaseout of cassette tapes.

Concerted efforts

These concerted efforts finally bore fruit a few years ago, and as 2005 draws to a close, at least 20 artists have scored platinum records (40,000 units sold).

The duo MYMP (Juris and Chin) is the surprising leader of the pack, hitting the mark seven times over with its two-disc set, "Versions and Beyond." A close runner-up is Nina's

MUSIC/A2-2

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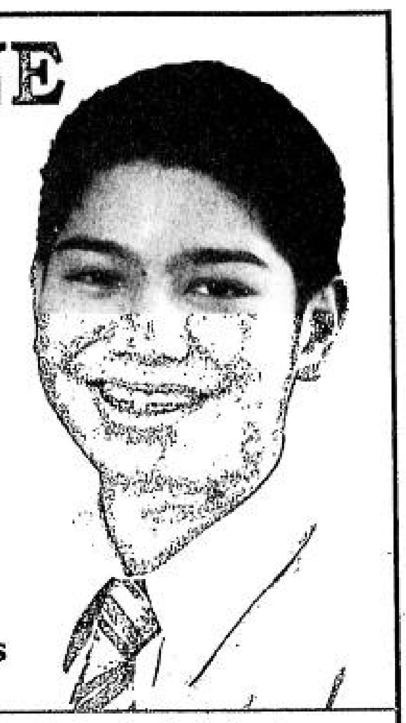
James Arthur Torres



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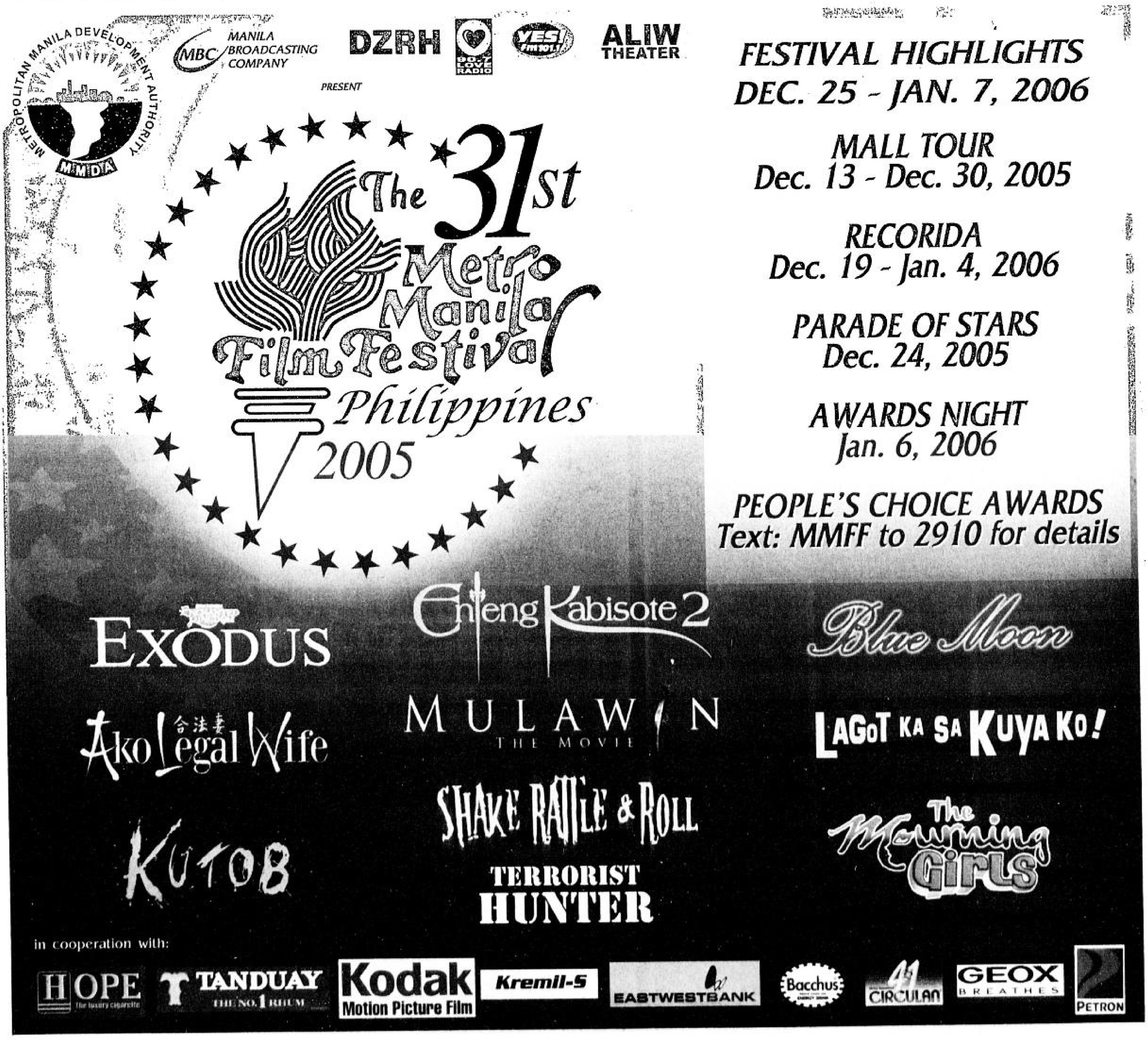

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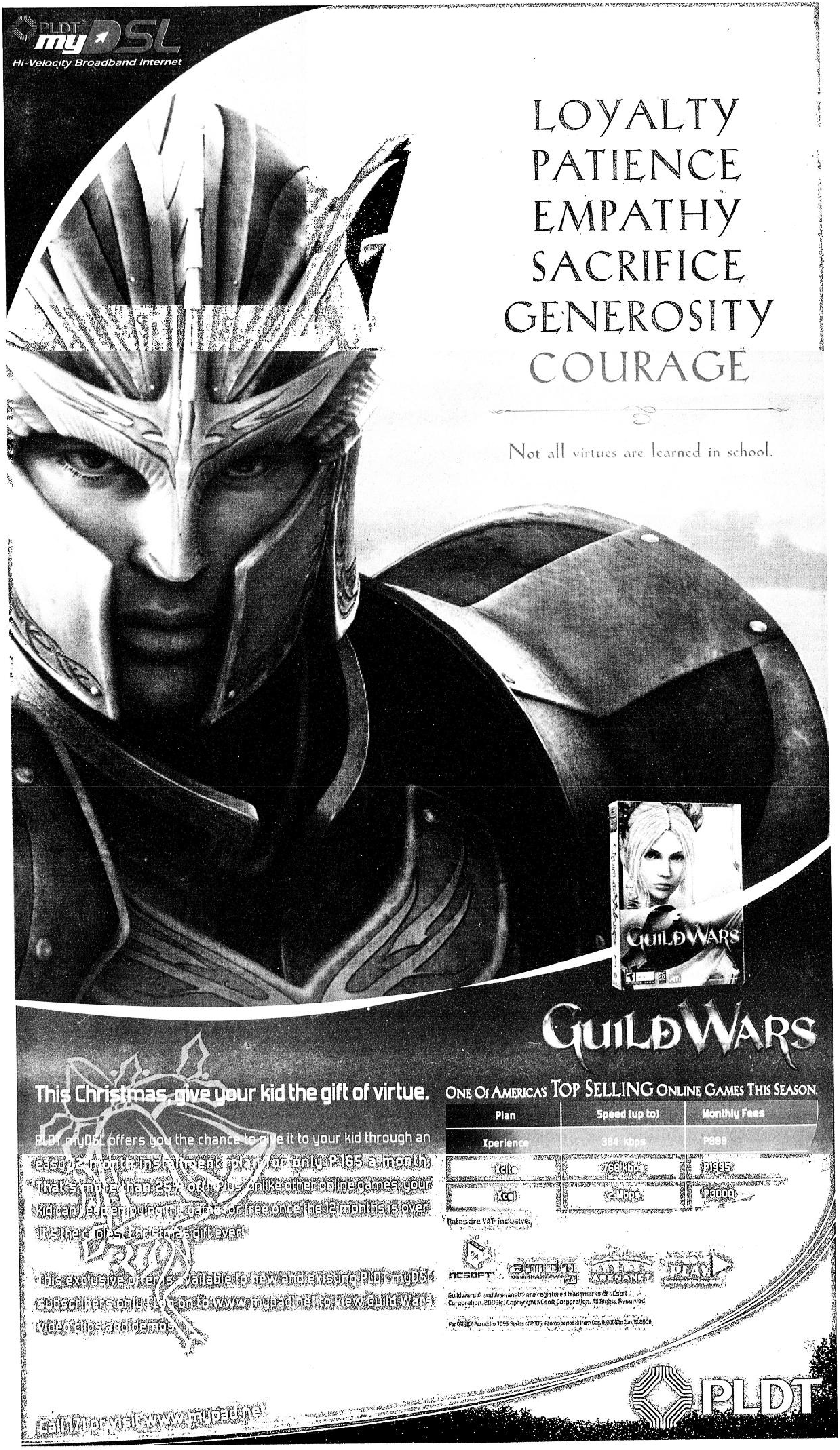

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SATURDAY Special

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NOW SHOWING

Fate and allegory in Peter Jackson's triumphant remake

By Rito P. Asilo

"King Kong"
D: Peter Jackson
S: Naomi Watts, Jack Black, Adrien Brody, Andy Serkis

PREPARE TO BE BLOWN AWAY. After his exhilarating forays into the world of hobbits, elves and sorcerers in "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy, Peter Jackson takes on Merian Cooper and Ernest Schoedsack's 1933 motion-picture classic—about a mighty beast who meets his tragic fate when he yields to the feminine wiles of a doe-eyed beauty.

The director expands the original story's narrative into a jaw-dropping and ultimately heartbreaking three-hour and seven-minute cinematic extravaganza.

Jackson sets his story in 1933, at a time when the bleak realities of the Great Depression reared its ugly head in the lives of down-on-his-luck filmmaker, Carl Denham (Jack Black), and his assistant, Preston (Colin Hanks); jobless vaudeville actress, Ann Darrow (Naomi Watts); sensitive playwright, Jack Driscoll (Adrien Brody); self-absorbed B-list action star, Bruce Baxter (Kyle Chandler), and Capt. Englehorn (Thomas Kretschmann).

In dire straits, these quirky characters set out on a fateful, exploratory expedition to turn their dwindling luck into opportunity—until they find themselves marooned on Skull Island, an unexplored territory that links the present world with its savage past!

As a consequence of ambition, they get more than they bargain for—and so do we: Predatory tribesmen, brontosaurs, tyrannosaurs, raptors, humongous centipedes, creepy arachnids, head-sucking slimy slugs, flesh-nibbling bats—and a 25-foot gorilla (Andy Serkis)!

Once again, Jackson shows off his awesome cinematic acumen—a rare combination of technical wizardry and storytelling savvy that, despite a protracted running time, keeps moviegoers glued to their seats.

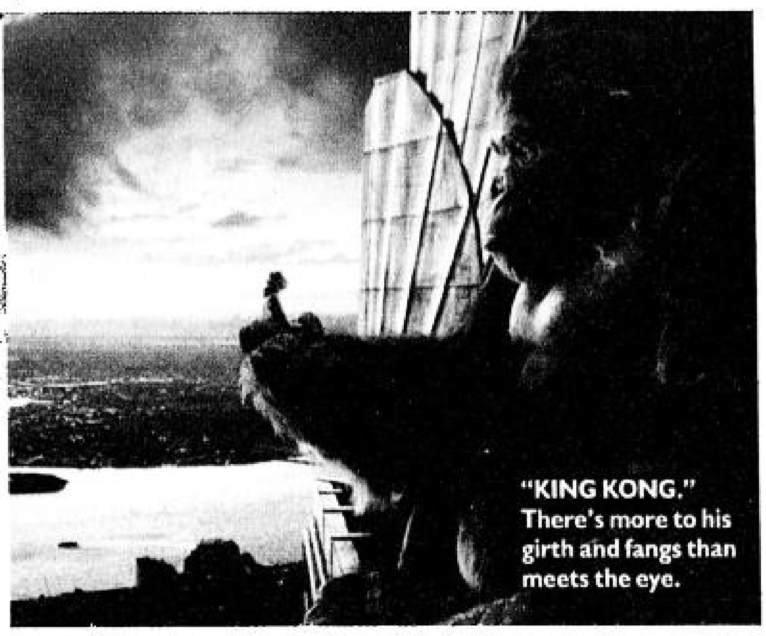
With a leisurely pace, he bides his time to allow his audience to get to know the individual concerns of his flawed human protagonists and makes their motivations seep through the film's awesome albeit overblown spectacle. Then, before you notice it, he casts his cinematic spell on you, and you're caught—hook, line and sinker! Claustrophobics, don't say we didn't warn you!

After Kong is introduced, the story segues into a nonstop adrenaline-induced rollercoaster ride, and you find yourself screaming along, not just *for* but *with* its characters—all the way to the top of the Empire State Building, where King Kong bravely faces and seals his destiny! Is the nature of the beast any different from the nature of man?

Much of "King Kong's" power lies in the tie that binds Ann and her primate buddy—and how their relationship has blossomed into an unlikely friendship. Watts and Brody lend their thespic prowess, while Chandler provides some comic relief to Jackson's triumphant allegorical tale.

In another uniquely memorable portrayal, Andy Serkis, who played Gollum in the "LOTR" franchise, brings sensitivity and humanity to the mighty ape's beastly façade, and imbues his big-screen alter ego with a sense of honor and dignity. Indeed, under Serkis' able characterization, there's more to Kong's girth and fangs than meets the eye!

When King Kong gently shoves Ann away to protect her from a hail of bullets, you find yourself shedding a tear—you empathize with him, mourn for his sacrifice, and grieve over relationships that are never meant to be.



"KING KONG." There's more to his girth and fangs than meets the eye.

Christian pop culture on the upswing

By Nestor U. Torre

FOR YEARS NOW, WE'VE BEEN urging producers to come up with more spiritual and family-oriented shows and films, because we sense that there's a huge audience out there that's hungry for inspiring entertainment.

It looks like we've been barking up the right tree, because we now have confirmation from entertainment circles abroad that spiritual productions are on a roll.

Spiritual

In the United States, it's called Christian pop culture, and grosses show that the spiritual entertainment industry is raking in more than $3 billion a year. *That's* big bucks in any language!

More than the monetary component, this proves that there are millions of people out there who are eager to patronize, not entertainment for diversion's sake, but shows and films that inspire, and deepen their faith.

Other entertainment observers describe this trend as "Christianity going mainstream." Well, it stands to reason, doesn't it? Over 80 percent of the US population is Christian, so it should be open to specifically Christian entertainment.

Granted, some religious shows are turn-offs, because they're overly pious and even smug about faith. Those shows are generally given a wide berth by many members of today's Christian audience, so the word's

CHRISTIAN/ A3-2

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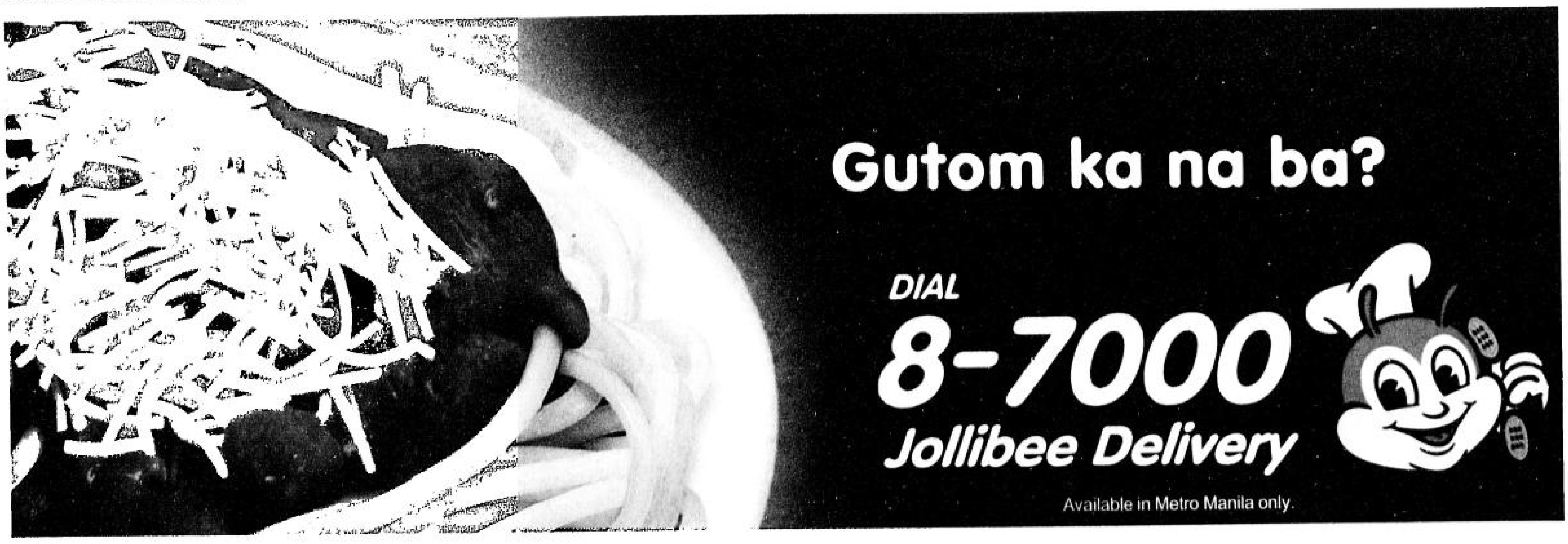


Christmas gifts for my friends

By Behn Cervantes

I HAVE BEEN DESCRIBED AS A cheery gift giver because I try to give appropriate presents to friends. The choice depends on a number of considerations: what they really like, things they collect, or some object appropriate for their line of work.

I do not like giving generic gifts like ties, socks, underwear and hankies. Nothing turns me off more than receiving unimaginative gifts like those. Therefore, when NUT asked what I would gift certain friends with this Christmas, I had to think hard what would make those wonderful people *really* happy.

Video

One of my oldest friends in the film industry is Barbara Perez. Years ago, while traveling through the States, I chanced upon a VHS of the movie "No Man Is an Island," in which she acted during the '60s , co-starring with Jeffrey Hunter. I immediately bought the video and gifted it to her.

PEREZ. Life-sized posters of "No Man Is an Island."

Amsterdam-based Franklin Bobadilla also scrounged around for life-sized posters of that same movie and gave them to a delighted Barbara.

I wish I could gift her with Audrey's dark glasses in "Breakfast At Tiffany." Barbara was not only the Hepburn of the Philippines, she would also look spectacular behind those large specs.

Memento

Gloria Diaz is our first Miss Universe. I would love to get her one of Armi Kusela's Miss Universe mementos, because the Finnish beauty won the first title in Long Beach.

If I can't get Gloria one of Armi's mementos, I would love to give her a sizable tektite as a token of her "universal" quality!

Since Araceli "Cheloy" Dans paints such intricate interpretations of *callado*, I would love to find an ample-sized Belgian lace tablecloth for her to include in one of her remarkable paintings. The gift would forever be immortalized in one of her precious art works!

Something special

I would love to find a *relicario* in Mexico to give to Mrs. Isabel "*Tita* Blit" Torre. She is one of the gentlest persons I have ever known and learned to care for these past few years. She never asks for anything but deserves so much. Therefore, she is a person to whom you want to give something special.

Not too long ago, I found an interesting crucifix and gave it to *Tita* Blit. She was ever so touched. I would love to surprise her once again with something just as meaningful and appreciated!

Tita Muñoz is one of the grand dames of Philippine Theater. Tita was *la Muñoz* when the rest of us were merely beginning to learn the ABC's of theater.

She was so talented and keenly intelligent that an infatuated (later National Artist) Rolando Tinio wrote an ode to every corner of her San Juan apartment!

I would love to get Tita an autographed photo of Helen Hayes!

Popularity

One entertainer I have always admired is the inimitable Nikki Ross. The livewire half of the Wing Duo, Nikki was much loved at the height of the Manila Grand Opera House's popularity in the '50s.

I would love to give dear Nikki a complete collection of Mel Torme's incomparable interpretations of blues and ballads!

Mitch Valdes is without doubt a world-class talent. All Mitch needs is the proper break abroad. When Rosie O'Donnell used to host a noontime television talk show in New York, I really wanted Mitch to guest and sing on that program and show off her awesome skill. She could have showcased her awesome comic talent, great singing ability and *pang*-international verve!

Cliché and stereotype in 'The Man'

By Noelani Torre

THE BUDDY ACTION-COMEDY HAS been a Hollywood staple for decades now—and, in the case of Les Mayfield's "The Man," at least, the age is showing. Mayfield's movie has all the familiar elements of films like "48 Hours" and "Rush Hour"—an odd couple team-up, a case of mistaken identity, cops and robbers—but not much else.

Mismatched pair

The mismatched pair in this particular set-up is Samuel L. Jackson and Eugene Levy. Jackson, plays Agent Derrick Vann of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

He has to solve a big gun heist that involved his now dead partner to clear his name, but his job is complicated by dental-supply salesman, Andy Fiddler (Levy), who accidentally gets in the middle of a deal between Vann and the bad guys.

They mistake Fiddler for Vann, and so the badass black agent has to bring the white chatterbox salesman along for the ride.

The pairing itself is not a bad idea—super-cool Jackson and the sunny, nerdy Levy present a perfect contrast. But, even the best thespians have to have more than their own talent going for them, and this is where things start to go wrong.

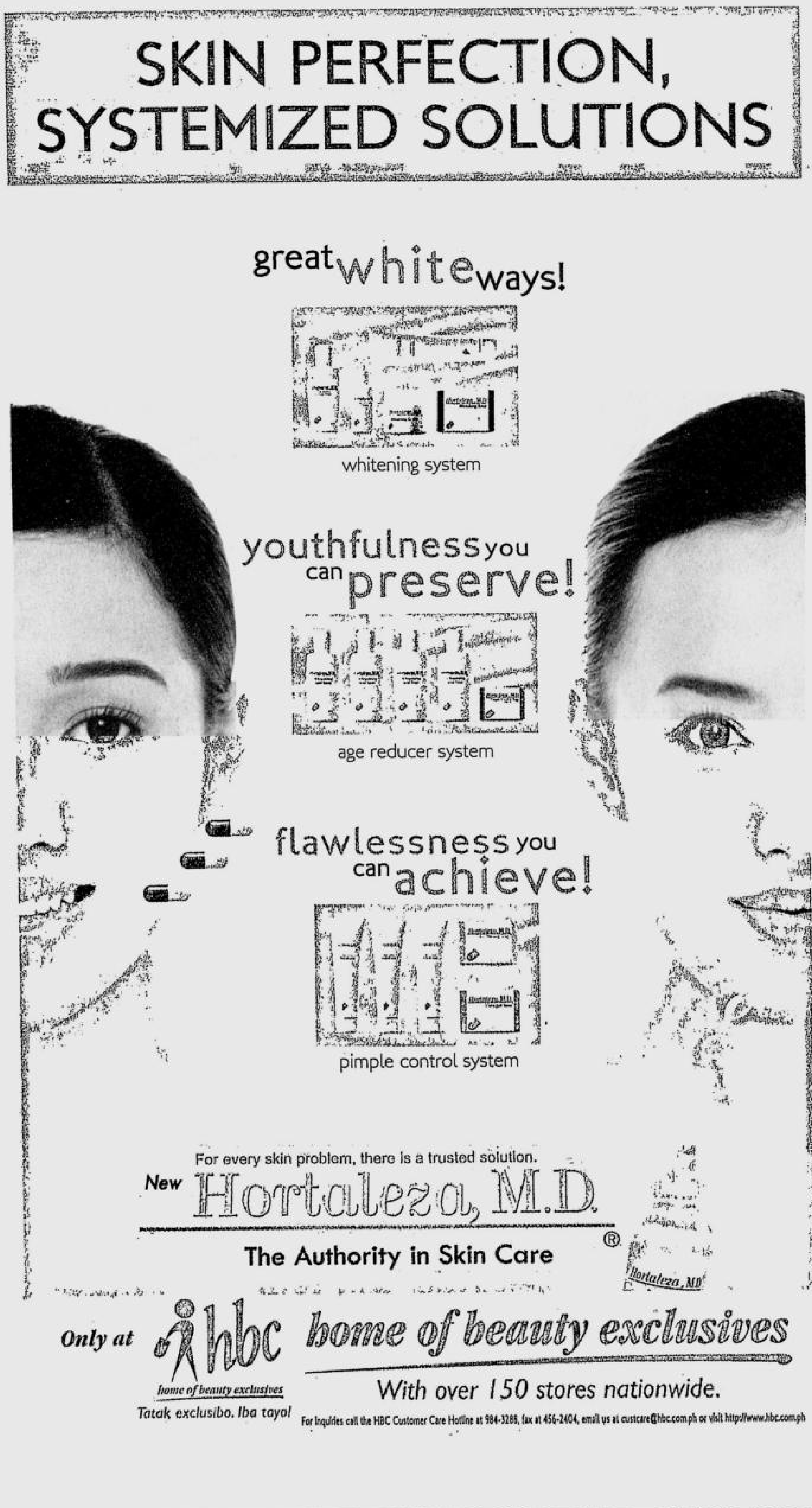
Tagline

"The Man" has good actors and a great tagline—"One guy walks the walk. The other talks and talks"—but, it does not have a good script. The plot is thin and shaky.

What the screenwriters have done is to merely string together every action-comedy cliché and stereotype that we've encountered. This does not make for very enjoyable watching.

Despite their efforts, Jackson and Levy simply can't get enough life out of this old horse, and you can't help but feel sorry for them. Sure, the film does have its moments—the "bitch" role reversal *and* the flatulence business are perhaps the funniest—but, they are few and far between.

"The Man" is dull for the most part, and even the car chases are unexciting. Director Mayfield may have sensed this, because his movie ends after only an hour and a half, right at the moment when you've decided that you've had enough.



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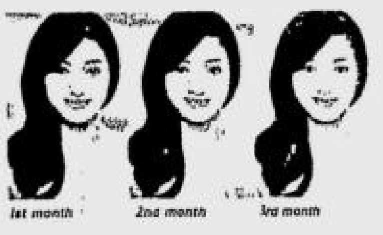

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Revivals discourage originality in show business

By Nestor U. Torre

SOME YEARS AGO, FILIPINO MUSIC PEOPLE and fans complained that originality had pretty much flown out of the window in their field, and many album producers were simply banking on revivals of old hits.

Later, the same slump in originality affected local movies, partly accounting for the travails that the Filipino film industry is currently experiencing.

Remake route

Well, these days, it's the turn of Philippine television to go the desultory and unoriginal revival or remake route.

You can see it most obviously happening in the evening *telenovela* slot.

There's "Panday," with its new take on Fernanado Poe Jr.'s signature film character. "Mga Anghel na Walang Langit," "inspired" by an old movie—which, incidentally, was also directed by FPJ (under his directorial alias, Ronwaldo Reyes). And "Kampanerang Kuba" is the TV version of one of Vilma Santos' early starrers.

All of those shows are on Channel 2. Channel 7 doesn't have a direct spin-off among its evening telenovela offerings, but it's instructive to note that its previous series, "Encantadia," and its current "prequel," "Etheria," are reminiscent of the old costume and swashbuckling photoplays that were produced by Sampaguita Pictures, LVN Films and Premiere Productions in the 1950s.

Spectacle

Channel 7's costume shows bring back the color and spectacle of those old epics about heroic swains, damsels in distress, and warring kingdoms.

So, the more things change, the more they remain the same.

What accounts for the revived popularity of old entertainment formats in their current TV reincarnations?

First, it must be that the original productions' makers had put their collective finger on a seminal interest of the Filipino viewing public.

As a result, the material continues to delight viewers—a full 50 years after it first clicked with moviegoers!

Second, the new TV series' producers have updated the old formats with young stars, production values and, most significantly, special effects. These effects have made the old material even more magical than it used to be, thus plugging into another significant interest of Filipino viewers—fantasy.

Fixation

Sadly, this fixation on turning old material into new moneymakers has inhibited topical and thematic originality on the tube. It's understandable why TV moguls would want to play it safe in this predictable wise, but we hope that there are more intrepid producers out there who will generate genuine excitement on TV next year.

Even as we say that, however, we note that a new telenovela, "Gulong ng Palad," has been "inspired" by an old *radio* soap. Uh-oh.

Finally, we have to observe that the TV-revived interest in costume spectaculars has affected the film scene as well. In the 2005 Metro filmfest, Bong Revilla's "Exodus" and "Mulawin, The Movie" are obvious crossovers from the TV trend. And so the desultory circle inexorably whirls . . .

Christian. .

•From page A3-1

out: Spiritual shows should be about faith in action, and set in the real world.

Innovations include the popularity of "praise nightclubs"—and even a spiritual music version of the "American Idol" talent search. Bible-based video games are also clicking with young people.

Most successful

On TV, the Eternal Word Catholic Network and "The 700 Club" lead the way. And, in the movies, Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" has spawned other spiritual productions, the most successful of which is the current US box-office champion, "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe," which grossed a stunning $67 million on its first weekend!

If money talks (and it does), the exceptional success of "Passion" and "Narnia" speaks in a loud and persuasive voice that producers should pay attention to.

Again, beyond the money, it's about reminding viewers that there's a deeper, more significant existence apart form this vale of tears and technology.

Insight

True, not many entertainment people have the depth of insight to convincingly champion spirituality. But, those who do should take advantage of the current openness of the Christian audience to religious material.

Let them take their cue from that audience's stated needs: They say that they want spiritual productions to help them become better people, teach them the tenets of their faith in an engaged, realistic way, inspire them to serve God and His other children, and get to know Jesus Christ better.

If producers strive to fulfill those objectives, their shows, films, recordings and live performances should find similar favor among the millions of Christians who want to become more Christ-like in their lives!

Stories behind 'Rudolph' and other Christmas carols

FROM EDSEL BAUTISTA: "I LOVE TRIVIA. Please tell us about the origins of our favorite Christmas carols like 'O Holy Night' and 'Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer.'"

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

"Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let Earth receive her King!" So goes the popular holiday song, which was written in 1719 by Isaac Watts and set to music by George Frederick Handel.

Yet, despite the song's happy tone, Watts didn't have it easy. He was a sickly, short man with a disproportionately large head, whose recurring psychological illness would often incapacitate him. Whenever he felt well enough to preach, though, crowds hung on to his every word!

Troubled times

Born in troubled times, Isaac's family refused to conform to the norms of organized religion, and they were denied access to universities and were refused suitable employment.

But, almost three centuries after his birth, he is now considered the "Father of English hymns."

"Little Drummer Boy's" original title was "Carol of the Drums." It was composed one afternoon by Missouri musician Katherine Davis, whose inspiration came as she was "trying to take a nap." She envisioned a poor young boy who, unable to afford a gift for the infant Jesus, plays his drum for the newborn babe, with the Virgin Mary's approval.

RUDOLPH. Marketing ploy that became a hit

Poem

Ironically, the song about our favorite red-nosed reindeer, Rudolph, is a product of American ad executive Robert May's capitalistic endeavors. He was asked to produce a poem that could be given away to children by the Santa Clauses employed by department stores during the Christmas season! This marketing ploy became a massive success, and approximately 2.5 million poems were given away on the first year of its publication!

In 1949, singer Gene Autry recorded a musical version of "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer," with music composed by Johnny Marks, who later came up with two sequels to the poem: "Rudolph's Second Christmas" and "Rudolph Shines Again"—which weren't as successful as the first!

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12 things we can do to help our country

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

ATTY. ALEXANDER L. LACSON, 40, is a UP graduate, College of Law Batch '96. He took up post-graduate studies at Harvard.

Four years ago he and his wife Pia had a serious discussion whether to migrate. They decided to stay here, and do something to improve the country. —Like what?

Here are 12 of his suggestions:

Traffic rules

1. Follow traffic rules. Obey the law.

2. Whenever you buy or pay for anything, always ask for an official receipt.

3. Don't buy smuggled goods. Buy Filipino.

4. When you talk to others, especially to foreigners, speak positively about us and our country.

5. Respect your traffic officer, policeman and soldier.

6. Do not litter. Dispose of your garbage properly. Segregate. Recycle. Conserve.

7. Support your church.

8. During elections, do your solemn duty.

9. Pay your employees well.

SENATOR Pimentel reads to grandchild, Preet.

10. Pay your taxes.

11. Adopt a scholar or a poor child.

12. Be a good parent. Teach your kids to follow the law and love our country.

Those interested in Lacson's 105-page book on the subject may email alacsonph@yahoo.com, or call 0917 898-1358.

Gripping narrative

Roger P. Olivares' modern sequel to Dr. Jose P. Rizal's novel, "Where to Now, My Country? Noli Me Tangere 2," employs intense characterization and gripping narrative in 220 pages to rock the conscience of Filipinos and wake them up to the latent virtues of our people, as Dr. Jose Rizal did.

This is a thought-provoking book written with remarkable skill, and is a worthy sequel to Rizal's "Noli."

'Celebrities Reading'

"Celebrities Reading," a photo exhibit of 16 well-known personalities (including Sen. Aquilino Pimentel) will open on Dec. 19 at 4 p.m., and will run till Jan. 3, at the Powerbooks store at the 2nd Level, Greenbelt 4, with Mrs. Socorro C. Ramos as special guest.

Our exhibit shows celebrities reading, so Filipinos may be encouraged to read again and find the beauty of words in books.

Email mandynavasero@yahoo.com or call 8991767

Rico and friends sing for a cause

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST WEDNESDAY, WE HAD A good time at Rico J. Puno's music bar, Corik's, at the launch of his "Rico J. Puno and Friends" Christmas album, produced by Bibsy Carballo (721-0801), with all tracks arranged by Toti Fuentes. (Other performance dates are Dec. 21 and 28).

Toti played some numbers in his grand theatrical style, and the packed crowd roared its approval.

PUNO. Inimitable vocal sass and "winking" performance style.

Jazzy memories

A special treat was Jacqui Magno's suite of songs, which brought back jazzy memories of groovy nights in the '70s and '80s, when she was the toast of local music the town.

A choice recollection of that cool period is of Jacqui singing "The Rose" with all of the passion, emotion and artistry that the beautiful song demands.

It's been years since that sublime time, but Jacqui still sings with passion and verve, and even the younger members of the audience last Wednesday were lavish in their expressions of approval.

Then, it was Rico J's turn to remind the crowd what "total performance" is all about. His inimitable vocal sass and "winking" performance style delighted the audience, which was raring for a good time—and got it!

Sexy cracks

Rico J is unique because he combines gutsy singing with "green" jokes—and he wasn't

RICO/ A3-4

SILVERWORKS
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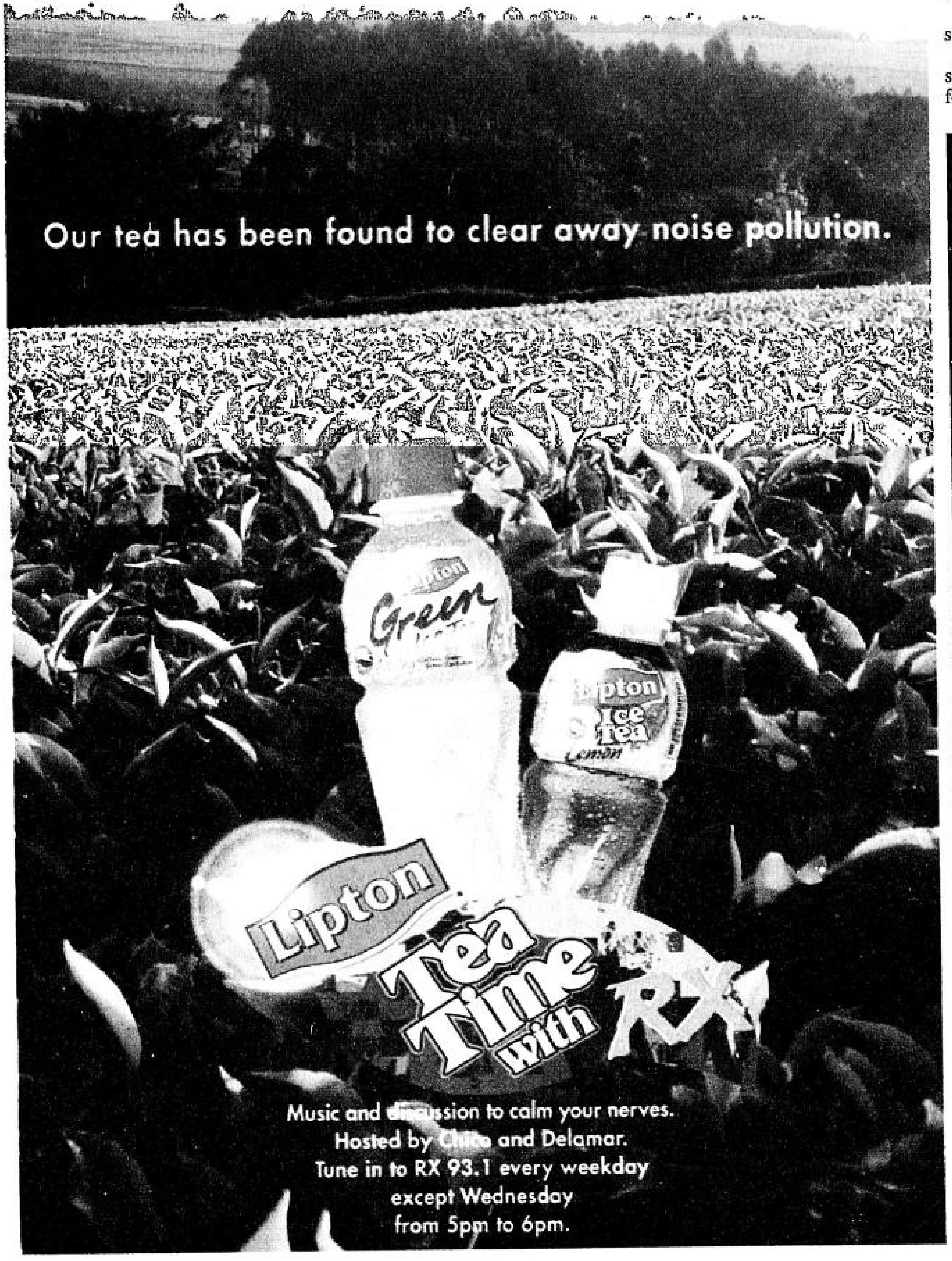
Rico and friends sing for a cause

From page A3-3

stingy with the sexy cracks, either.

When Ivy Violan stepped up to the mike, she delighted the crowd some more with her feisty yet musically insightful rendition of pop classics.

Other singers are featured in Rico's Christmas album, which benefits children who, like Toti, are afflicted with cancer. —A very worthy cause, so get yourself a copy (call 724-1762).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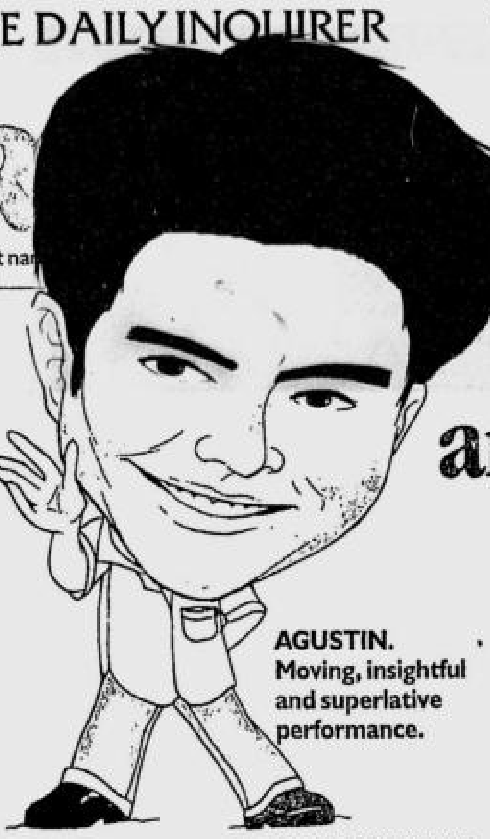
Editor **Nestor U. Torre**
Assistant Editor **Rito P. Asilo**

'MAGING AKIN MULI'

Instructive film on faith and rebirth

By Nestor U. Torre



AGUSTIN. **Moving, insightful and superlative performance.**

CARICATURE BY LA MISTADES

DON'T MISS MARILOU Diaz-Abaya's TV movie, "Maging Akin Muli," which will be telecast on Channel 2 at 10:30 p.m. on Dec. 18.

We caught the film in a preview last Monday, and found ourselves instantly involved in its story about the difficult voyage to priesthood of a young deacon, played by Marvin Agustin.

His travails begin when he's assigned for six months to the parish of a conservative priest (Noel Trinidad), who frowns on the "ultra-modern" innovations that the deacon proposes.

Persistence

Marvin's character is also hounded by a former girlfriend (Missy Maramara), and her petulant persistence leads to subsequent events that provoke a full-blown scandal that threatens, not just Marvin's priestly vocation, but peace in the parish, as well.

Other irritants between Marvin and the old parish priest include their contrasting reactions to a convict's being sentenced to death, and to a big donor who pushes his weight around.

It's a good thing that Marvin can count on the support of his mother (Sandy Andolong) and his mentor at the seminary (Noni Buencamino).

But, his greatest strength turns out to be his vocation itself. At the start of his stint at the parish, it's excessively idealistic, but the problems he has to contend with serve as a crucible that situates his vocation in the here and now, and thus transforms it into the genuine gold of tested faith.

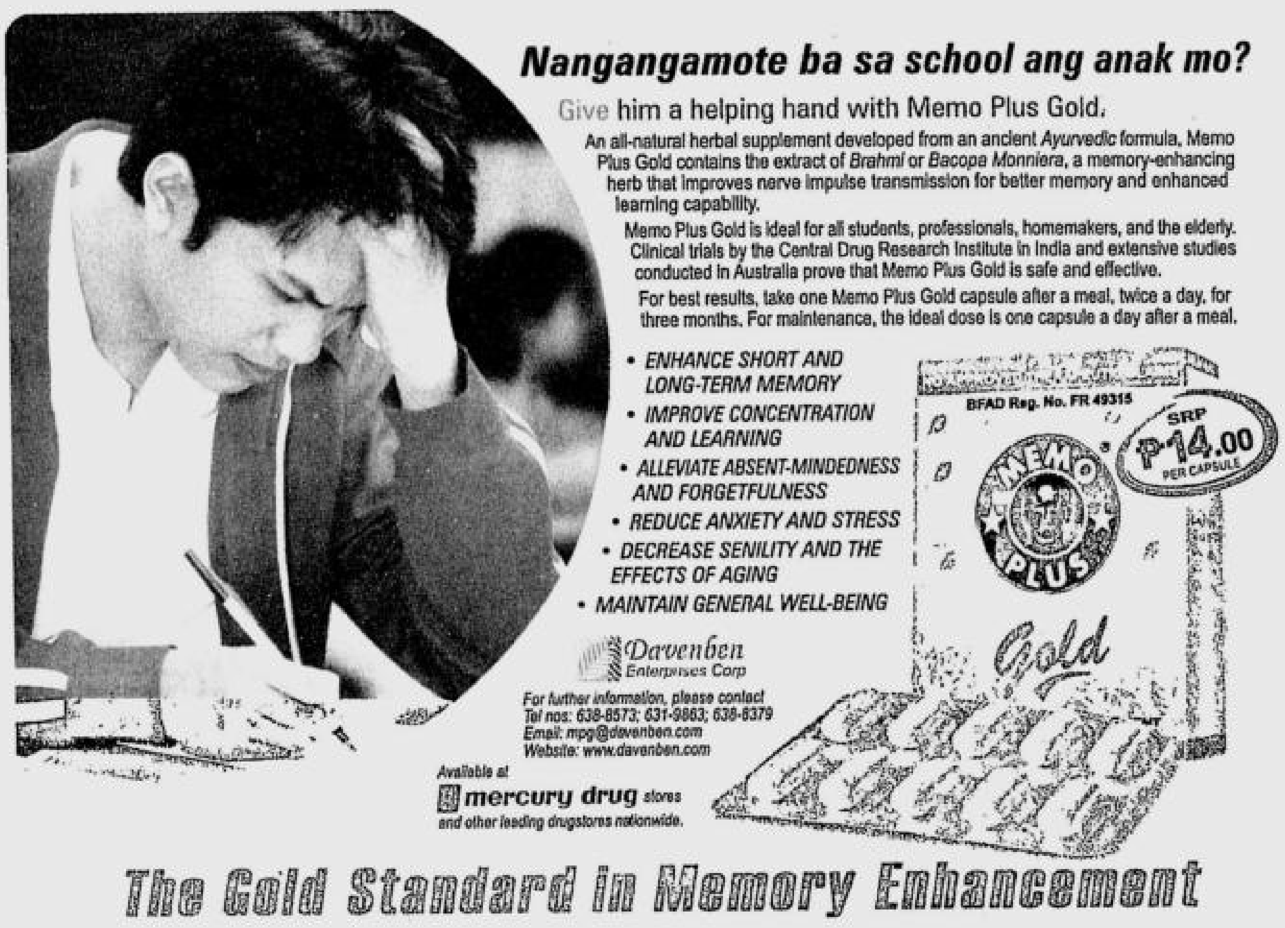
Valuable truth

This is a valuable truth to learn not just for members of the clergy, but for all people of faith. We are grateful to writer-director Abaya for sharing it with us—especially as we are about to celebrate the birthday of Jesus Christ. May this film prompt a similar rebirth in our own spiritual lives.

"Maging Akin Muli" is also instructive in another sense, because it's one of the most technically-polished digital movies we've seen.

The production's team of professionals and gifted film students prove that "digital" doesn't have to mean dark, muggy images and poor sound.

Abaya elicits superior performances from her cast members, but we'd like to pay particular mention of Marvin Agustin, because his performance isn't only moving, insightful and superlative, but it also vivifies the film's spiritual theme in a deeply felt way.



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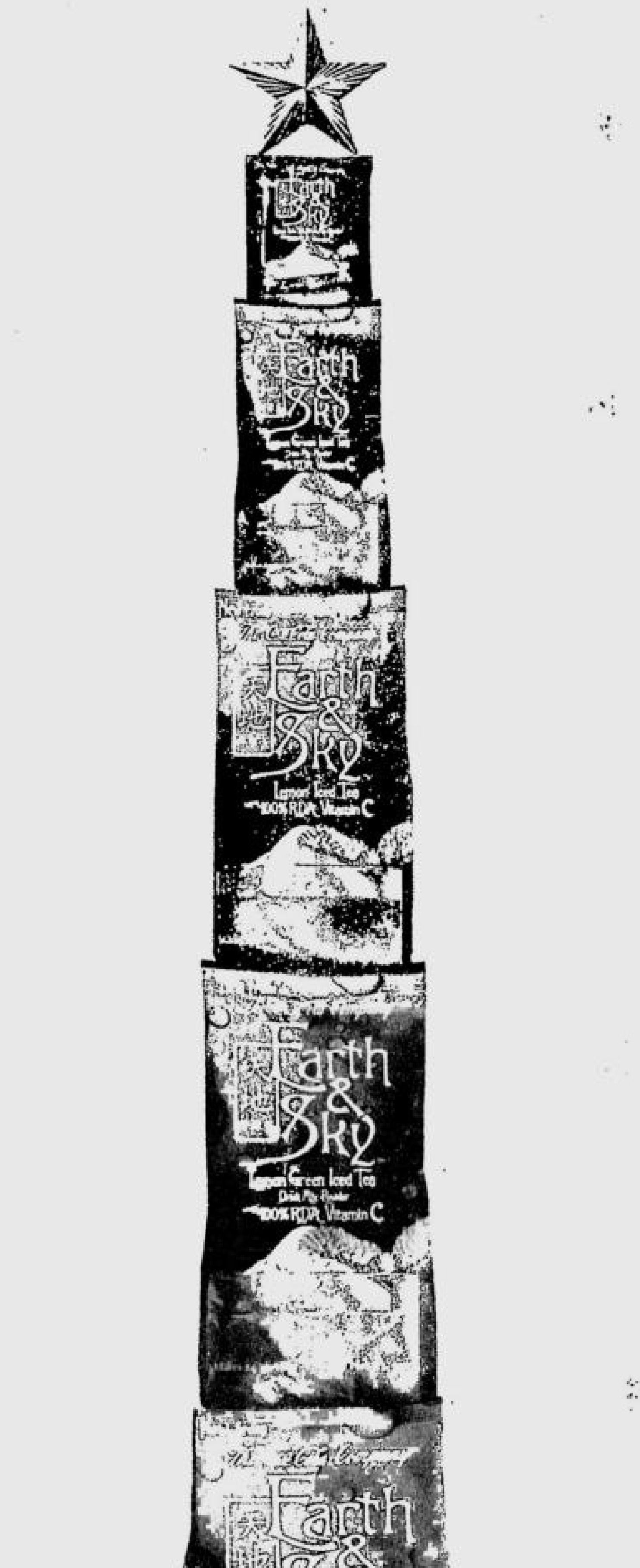

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1 KING KONG • THX
11:30 3:10 6:50 10:30

2 KING KONG
12:40 4:20 8:00

3 KING KONG
1:10 4:50 8:30

4 KING KONG
1:40 5:20 9:00

5 KING KONG
11:00 2:40 6:20 10:00

6 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30

7 IN HER SHOES
1:35 4:20 7:05 9:50

8 THE FOG
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

9 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

10 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
12:10 3:20 6:30 9:40

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 KING KONG
1:50 5:20 8:50

2 HARRY POTTER 4 12:30 3:40
IN HER SHOES 7:00 9:50

3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

4 KING KONG
11:20 2:50 6:20 9:50

5 KING KONG
11:20 2:50 6:20 9:50

6 KING KONG
12:20 3:50 7:20

7 THE FOG
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

METRO EAST 682-8193 / 682-8199

1 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

2 KING KONG
10:25 2:10 5:50 9:40

3 KING KONG
2:10 5:55 9:40

4 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
12:20 2:30 4:40 6:50 9:00

5 THE FOG
1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05

6 KING KONG
5:15 9:00

7 KING KONG
1:30 5:15 9:00

8 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 THE FOG
5 JUST LIKE HEAVEN

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2576

1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 RESERVE
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1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
4 THE FOG

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2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
3 IN HER SHOES
4 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
5 KING KONG

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2 KING KONG
3 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET OF FIRE
4 THE FOG

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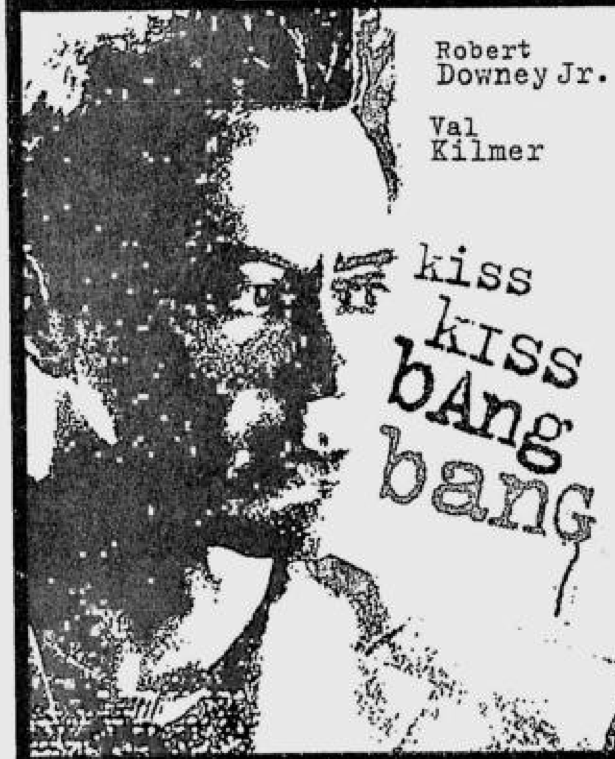
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G1 GLORIETTA 1	THE FOG	KINGKONG	ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS	AN UNFINISHED LIFE			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	JUST LIKE HEAVEN	HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE	THX KINGKONG GUARANTEED SEATS	KISS KISS BANG BANG	CHICKEN LITTLE	KINGKONG	IN HER SHOES
GB1 GREENBELT 1	ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS	KINGKONG					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	THX KINGKONG GUARANTEED SEATS	THX KINGKONG GUARANTEED SEATS	IN HER SHOES GUARANTEED SEATS	KISS KISS BANG BANG GUARANTEED SEATS	JUST LIKE HEAVEN GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	THX KINGKONG	KINGKONG	JUST LIKE HEAVEN	IN HER SHOES	THE FOG		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	KINGKONG	KINGKONG	JUST LIKE HEAVEN	THE FOG			



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ERASERHEADS. Dubbed "the Beatles of the Philippines."

Worthy tribute to Eraserheads

By Noelani Torre

IT'S ONLY BEEN TWO YEARS SINCE THE break-up of Eraserheads, but that seems to be long enough for most. A few weeks ago, Jam 88.3 and Sony BMG launched the tribute album, "Ultraelectromagneticjam: Songs of the Eraserheads," and it looks like it could be this year's best-selling release.

Some may think that it's too early for the group to get a tribute—the E-heads' former frontman Ely Buendia himself said in an interview that he feels "it's not yet the right time, because I'm still doing something worthwhile"—but the fans are loving it!

Appeal

The Eraserheads remain one of the most popular and important bands in OPM history. They're one of the few groups that have enjoyed multi-generational and multi-sectoral appeal, and have even been dubbed "the Beatles of the Philippines."

Composed of singer/guitarist Ely Buendia, lead guitarist Marcus Adoro, bassist Buddy Zabala, and drummer Raymund Marasigan, the E-heads released nine hit albums from 1993 to 2001.

Buendia left to form The Mongols, and was replaced by female vocalist Kris Dancel (of Fatal Posporos), but the new lineup didn't last long. Adoro quit, and the remaining members decided to call themselves Cambio.

That was the end of the E-heads, but not their music. Conceived by Eric Perpetua, Jam 88.3's associate program director, "Ultraelectromagneticjam" contains 17 Eraserheads songs interpreted by an all-star roster of artists.

Magic

Perpetua raves, "No other band can create musical magic the way Ely, Marcus, Raymund, and Buddy do when they come together.

"No other band is as witty, cheeky, spunky, and as Filipino when it comes to lyrics. No one comes close—then and now!"

The participating artists in "Ultraelectromagneticjam" were asked to pick their favorite E-heads song and reinterpret it according to their own styles.

They are: 6CycleMind ("Alapaap"); Paolo Santos ("Magasin"); Imago ("Spoliarium"); Barbie Almalbis ("Overdrive"); South Border, featuring Kelly Badon ("With A Smile"); Sugarfree ("Tikman"); Kitchie Nadal ("Ligaya"); Isha ("Torpedo"); Francis M and Hardware Syndrome, featuring Ely Buendia ("Superproxy 2K6");

Last track

Orange and Lemons ("Huwag Kang Matakot"); Spongecola ("Pare Ko"); MYMP ("Huwag Mo Nang Itanong"); Cueshé ("Hard to Believe"); Radioactive Sago Project ("Alkohol"); Brownman Revival ("Maling Akala"), and Rico J. Puno ("Ang Huling El Bimbo"). The last track, "Para sa Masa," features the abovementioned artists.

The stand-out tracks in the collection are Francis M's reinterpretation of "Superproxy 2K6," Radioactive Sago Project's spoken-word take on "Alkohol," and Rico J. Puno's surprisingly fitting rendition of "Ang Huling El Bimbo."

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GP

3 KINGKONG
12:40, 4:30, 8:20
GP

4 KINGKONG
1:50, 5:40, 9:30
GP

SHANG CINEPLEX

① KING KONG
MTRCB PG-13
9:30 PM

② CHICKEN LITTLE
MTRCB GP
11 00, 1.00, 3 00, 5.00 PM

③ KING KONG
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Premiere Theatre - P295 (includes unlimited popcorn and beverage)
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Call 633-7851, loc. 171 or 633-2227 /
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GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 KING KONG
PG13
10:20, 1:55, 5:35, 9:15

CINEMA 2 KING KONG
PG13
12:35, 4:15, 7:55

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 KING KONG
PG13
12:00, 3:40, 7:20, 11:00

CINEMA 4 KING KONG
PG13
10:50, 2:30, 6:10, 9:50

CINEMA 5 KING KONG
PG13
11:25, 3:05, 6:45, 10:25

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM
December 17, 2005 MISHKA ADAMS 8PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

Araneta Center Leisure Guide

AXN Gateway
AMAZING MALL CHALLENGE
UNLIMITED
TODAY
DECEMBER 17 SATURDAY
1 TO 7PM GATEWAY MALL

CINEMA SCHEDULES
Gateway CinePlex 10
LEVEL 4 GATEWAY MALL
ONLY P99 ADMISSION
P120 RESERVED SEATS
P150 KING KONG
P140 HARRY POTTER
GLOBE PLATINUM P249 / P299
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555

KING KONG
10:50 / 11:25 / 12:00 / 12:35 / 1:50 / 2:25
3:00 / 3:35 / 4:10 / 5:25 / 6:00 / 6:35
7:10 / 7:45 / 9:00 / 9:35 / 10:10 / 10:45

GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
KING KONG
1:50 / 5:25 / 9:00

CHICKEN LITTLE
12:30 / 3:30 / 4:30

JUST LIKE HEAVEN
12:40 / 2:50 / 5:00 / 7:10 / 9:20

THE FOG
12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40

MERRY CHRISTMAS
6:40 / 9:30

...MAXIMO OLIVEROS
12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30

ALI MALL CINEMAS
❶ KING KONG
12:30 / 4:05 / 7:40
❷ HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET
12:00 R4 / 2:00 / 5:00 / 8:00
❸ IN HER SHOES
12:30 / 3:10 / 5:50 / 8:30
❹ HARI NG SABLAY
12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00
❺ THE MYTH
12:45 / 3:15 / 5:45 / 8:20
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
BARNEY'S MUSICAL CASTLE
Showtime Today 1 pm & 7 pm
SPELLBOUND MAGIC SHOW
Opens December 25

CENTER EVENTS

SANTA MEET & GREET
Every Saturday & Sunday from 3 to 6pm at Level 2 (near Rustan's Department Store) of Gateway Mall until December 18

LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

CALL NOW 833-9999
SM CINEMA NOW SHOWING SM CINEMA CENTER Stage
movietime Box Office News Movie Schedules Live Events

FROM ACADEMY AWARD WINNING DIRECTOR
PETER JACKSON
KING KONG
IN THEATERS WORLDWIDE DECEMBER 14

WATCH THE BIGGEST MOVIE OF THE YEAR IN ALL OF SM CINEMAS NATIONWIDE

movietime SCHEDULE AND EVENTS

AKO LEGAL WIFE
TONIGHT at 7:30 p.m
SM Megamall Cinema 3.

SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
Dec. 20 • Megamall • Cinema 3

KUTOB
Dec. 20 • The Podium • Cinema 2

RED CARPET PREMIERE

ENTENG KABISOTE 2
Dec. 21 • The Podium • Cinema 2

EXODUS: TALES FROM THE ENCHANTED KINGDOM
Dec. 22 • Megamall • Cinema 10

MULAWIN
Dec. 23 • North Edsa • Cinema 1 & 2

SM movietime EXCLUSIVE
TWICE THE ACTION! TWICE THE FUN!
Samuel Jackson Eugene Levy
The MAN
Directed by Les Mayfield
NOW SHOWING EXCLUSIVELY AT SM CINEMAS
Bacoor, Bicutan, Fairview, Las Piñas, Manila, Megamall, North EDSA, San Lazaro, Sta. Mesa, Sucat, and Valenzuela
iFM 93.9

GUARANTEED SEATS

THE PODIUM 633-8976
1 KING KONG
10:40FS/11:00MF/02:30/06:00
09:10LFS/09:30LMF/12:40END
2 KING KONG
12:50FS/01:20MF/05:00
08:10LFS/08:40LMF/11:50END

MEGAMALL
1 KING KONG
12:00FS/12:30MF/04:10
07:20LFS/07:50LMF/11:00END

CEBU (032) 231-3876
1 KING KONG
11:00FS/11:15MF/02:40
06:05LFS/09:30LMF/11:35END
2 JOSE MARI CHAN
A PERFECT CHRISTMAS WITH JOSE MARI CHAN
3 KING KONG
10:35FS/10:45MF/02:10/05:35
08:43LFS/09:00LMF/12:05END

MANILA
0 KING KONG
12:40FS/01:10MF/04:35
07:35LFS/08:00LMF/11:00END

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
1 KING KONG
2 MERRY CHRISTMAS
3 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 KING KONG
5 KING KONG
6 KING KONG
7 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
8 THE FOG
9 KING KONG
10 KING KONG
11 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
12 THE MAN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 THE MYTH
2 CHICKEN LITTLE
3 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 KING KONG
5 HARI NG SABLAY
6 THE FOG
7 KING KONG
8 KING KONG
9 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
10 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
11 THE MAN
12 KING KONG

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 THE MAN
5 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
6 THE FOG
7 KING KONG
8 MERRY CHRISTMAS

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 KING KONG
2 THE FOG
3 KING KONG
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
5 KING KONG
6 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
7 MERRY CHRISTMAS
8 THE MAN
9 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
10 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 KING KONG
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG
5 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
6 KING KONG
7 THE MAN
8 THE FOG
9 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
10 HARI NG SABLAY

SM CITY MANILA
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 THE FOG
4 KING KONG
5 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
6 KING KONG
7 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
8 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
9 KING KONG
10 KING KONG
11 THE MYTH
12 THE MAN

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 THE MAN
4 KING KONG

SM VALENZUELA NOW OPEN
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 THE FOG

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 THE MAN
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG

SM SAN LAZARO
1 KING KONG
2 THE FOG
3 KING KONG
4 THE MAN
5 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
6 KING KONG

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 HARI NG SABLAY
5 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
6 KING KONG

SM CITY BACOOR
1 THE MAN
2 THE FOG
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG
5 KING KONG
6 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
7 KING KONG
8 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 KING KONG
2 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 THE MAN
4 KING KONG

SM CITY LUCENA
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
4 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

SM MOLINO NOW OPEN
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 THE FOG
4 IN HER SHOES

SM CITY MARILAO
1 KING KONG
2 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
3 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
4 KING KONG

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
4 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 KING KONG
2 A PERFECT CHRISTMAS WITH JOSE MARI CHAN
3 KING KONG
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
5 KING KONG
6 THE MYTH
7 KING KONG
8 KING KONG

SM CITY ILOILO
1 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
2 RESERVED
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG
5 KING KONG
6 JED MADELA CONCERT
7 THE FOG
8 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS

SM CITY DAVAO
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
4 THE FOG
5 KING KONG
5 KING KONG

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 THE MYTH
4 KING KONG

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

AXN Amazing Mall Challenge reels off today

MONTAGE

SUN CELLULAR DAYLITE CALL and Text Unlimited is the proud presenter of the AXN Amazing Mall Challenge Unlimited 2005, which will be held today at Gateway Mall and Tiendesitas.

Inspired by "The Amazing Race," the competition fields 30 teams of two. Selected retail outlets within the mall will be turned into "checkpoints," where teams can get the tasks they are supposed to perform.

Sun Cellular offers many services, like 24/7 Call and Text Unlimited, 24/7 Text Unlimited, 24/7 Text Unlimited Lite, Daylite Call and Text Unlimited, and 100 Top 10. Call 395-8000, or visit www.suncellular.com.ph.

'Da Vinci Code' trailer

The second teaser trailer of "The Da Vinci Code," with Tom Hanks playing Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon, has been released. The film is directed by Ron Howard.

Christmas concert at Dreamscape

Asia's youngest boyband, CY Voice, performs at Centerstage at the Dreamscape family fun center at Robinsons Galleria today and on Dec. 18, 23 at 3 p.m., and Dec. 20 and 21 at 5 p.m. Delight to the upbeat musical stylings of 11-year-old Carlo Ocampo and 12-year-olds Ryan Obar, Arjohn Teeson and Deandro Almariego. Call 636-2911 or 631-7594.

Jay R on tour

The new "Jay R" album mall tour will hit SM Southmall at 5 p.m. today and SM Fairview tomorrow. The album's carrier single is "Just the Way You Are."

Joy of reading

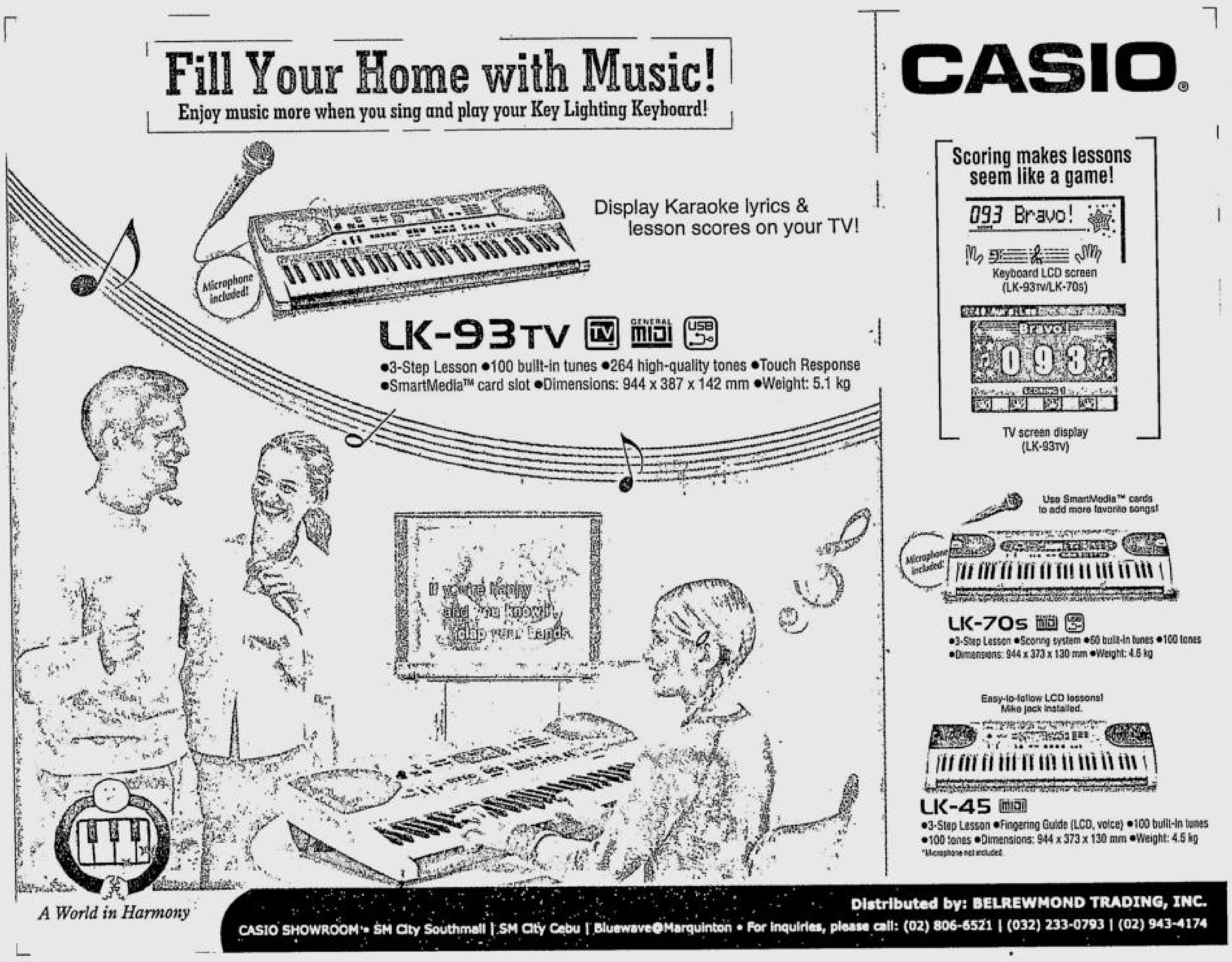
Run out of gift ideas? Take your pick form National Bookstore's Christmas Wish List, and share the joy of reading with your loved ones. Ongoing until Dec. 24, there's a 10 percent discount on selected titles, and 20 percent discount for Laking National Cardholders!

Movies on TV

On HBO today: at 1:40 p.m., "Helter Skelter." 8:40 p.m., "The Bourne Supremacy." 10:25 p.m., "Rome 5: The Ram Has Touched the Wall."

On Cinemax today: at 11:30 a.m., "Cape Fear." 3:30 p.m., "The Addams Family." 7 p.m. "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story." 9 p.m., "Ghosts of Mississippi."

HANKS. Topbills Ron Howard's big-screen version of Dan Brown's controversial novel.


Fill Your Home with Music!
Enjoy music more when you sing and play your Key Lighting Keyboard!

CASIO®

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LK-93TV
•3-Step Lesson •100 built-in tunes •264 high-quality tones •Touch Response •SmartMedia™ card slot •Dimensions: 944 x 387 x 142 mm •Weight: 5.1 kg

Scoring makes lessons seem like a game!
Keyboard LCD screen (LK-93TV/LK-70s)
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Use SmartMedia™ cards to add more favorite songs!

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*Microphone not included.

A World in Harmony

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The greatest gifts

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

WHAT ARE THE best gifts to give people we love? The perfect example of the best gift giver is Jesus Christ.

He came to this world to give everyone the greatest gifts and, up to this day, we are able to receive and relish them:

1. The commandment: Love the Father with all your heart, mind and being. Jesus taught that there is a loving Father Whom we can turn to. If we obey this first commandment, our life will truly be meaningful.

2. Next: Love your neighbor as you love yourself. Work for the welfare of God's children. Show respect and compassion. This way, you create brotherhood and peace wherever you go.

Submissive prayer

3. The gift of submissive prayer, as exemplified by the "Our Father." Prayer is a holy gift of being connected with our Father. We glorify Him and express our desire to dovetail our will with His.

4. The gift of forgiveness, as shown in Jesus' words: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." Christ showed us how to be more tolerant, and forgive people's offenses against us. He taught us not to hold on to pride and anger.

5. The gift of faith. Jesus came to show us that God is real.

6. The gift of wisdom. Jesus taught the real meaning of success, wealth and happiness.

Jesus' gifts are endless and priceless. And what is even more wonderful is that we can have and give away these gifts during Christmas. Yes, the season is truly happy for those who know its real spirit and meaning.

Have a blessed Christmas and give away the greatest gifts!

Rx PRESCRIPTION

Santa Claus is coming to mercury drug
NAKASISIGURO GAMOT AY LAGING BAGO

See me at any Mercury Drug store nationwide on Dec. 24, 2005 and receive Christmas TREATS and GOODIES - all for FREE!

Santa Claus

You can also catch Santa Claus at the following Mercury Drug Stores from December 18-24, 2005:

From 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- Cubao Gen. Romulo
- Alabang Town Center Zapote Rd.
- Ayala Center Glorietta
- Robinsons Galleria Ortigas
- St. Francis Square Mandaluyong
- Rockwell Center Makati
- Kalookan Monumento
- Ermita Padre Faura

From 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Araneta Center Farmers Plaza
- Ever Gotesco Commonwealth
- Ever Gotesco Pasig
- Festival Supermall Alabang
- Global City Taguig Market! Market!
- Greenhills Shoppesville
- Harrison Plaza Malate
- Shangri-La Plaza Mandaluyong

Free scoops of NESTLÉ ICE CREAM will also be available on selected dates at Mercury Drug Shangri-La Plaza, Market Market, Glorietta, Ever Gotesco Pasig, Robinsons Galleria Pasig and St. Francis Square.

Available exclusively at Mercury Drug in Mango, Café Vanilla & Melon flavors.

60 DIAMOND YEARS SINCE 1945

WHAT'S INSIDE

URC to raise P13B from sale of 635M shares /B2

Peso breaks holiday rally, ends at 53.45 /B3

BUSINESS

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Website: www.inq7money.net

Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

Gov't debt burden rose to ₱4.02T in September

As fiscal deficits persist

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT'S debt reached P4.02 trillion as of September this year, up by 2 percent from the previous month's level due to additional borrowings to finance spending that could not be covered by insufficient revenues.

The government's debt load would continue to rise as long as it has a budget deficit to cover. In the case of the Philippines, the budget deficit is seen to stand between P160 billion and P165 billion this year, but fiscal authorities are targeting to wipe out the deficit by 2008 and post a surplus by 2009.

The P4.02-trillion debt, if divided among the estimated 85.2 million Filipinos, would mean that each would have a share of P47,183 in the national government's liabilities.

Documents from the Bureau of Treasury showed that of the P4.02-trillion debt as of September, P1.87 trillion, or 47 percent, was owed to foreign creditors while P2.15 trillion, or 53 percent, was sourced from domestic lenders.

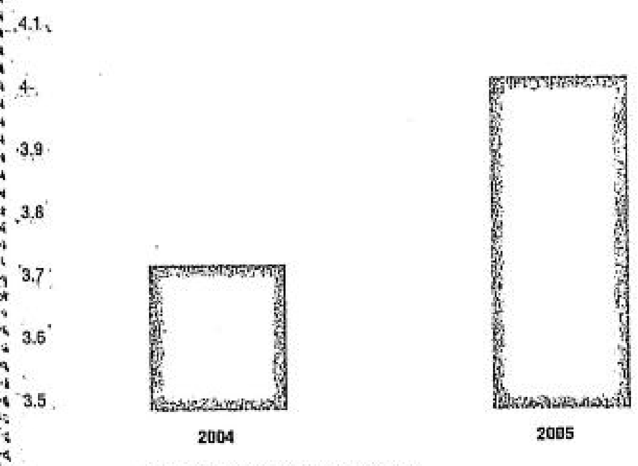
The domestic debt of P1.87 trillion in September reflected a 1.8-percent increase from the previous month's level. The increase in domestic debt was mostly accounted for by the rise in issuance of government securities.

The foreign liabilities of P2.15 trillion was 2.1 percent higher than the August level. The Treasury said the amount of foreign debt rose with the floatation of $1 billion worth of dollar-denominated bonds in September.

But the Treasury said the increase in foreign debt was partly eased by the appreciation of the peso against the US dollar and other foreign currencies. The Treasury added that the strengthening of the peso reduced the government's foreign obligations by P16 billion.

GOV'T/ B2

National government outstanding debt
September 2004 and 2005 (in trillion pesos)



SOURCE: BUREAU OF TREASURY

November budget gap exceeds ₱4.5-B ceiling

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUDGET DEFICIT OF THE national government hit P7.3 billion in November, exceeding the official ceiling for the month but still poised to have a budget gap for the full-year way below the 2005 goal.

The government spent P79.8 billion in November but collected only P72.6 billion in revenues.

The November deficit was P2.8 billion higher than the P4.5-billion programmed deficit for the month.

Fiscal authorities said the government could afford to be more flexible in its spending in the last quarter given the elbow room created by an over-performance in the budget position that started early in the year.

The latest deficit figure brought the budget gap for the January-to-November period to P122.8 billion, still P37.7 billion lower than the P160.5-billion ceiling.

The 11-month deficit resulted from P856.5 billion worth of expenses and P733.7 billion worth of revenue collection.

"With the November data, the emerging deficit for the full year is between P160 billion and P165 billion, but there is still the likelihood that we could do better than that," National Treasurer Omar Cruz said in a briefing yesterday at the Bureau of Treasury.

The Treasury's forecast on the full-year deficit was P15 billion to P20 billion better than the P180-billion ceiling set for 2005. Officials said the expected over-performance of the fiscal sector this year was seen to create the momentum for an improved interest rate scenario next year, if not better credit ratings for the Philippines.

The amount of government spending for the month exceeded the P75.4-billion program, Cruz said, as line agencies incurred higher operating expenses, and as the government serviced maturing interest payments and liabilities for infrastructure projects.

"We had room to channel spending to productive purposes, such as infrastructure, because

NOVEMBER/ B2

FIRST 11 MONTHS

BOP surplus hits $2.16B

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES INCURRED A BALance-of-payments deficit for the second straight month in November due to debt servicing, but a surplus of $2.16 billion was kept for the 11-month period owing to stronger foreign exchange build-up earlier this year.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday reported that for November alone, the BOP had a shortfall of $160 million, although this was still an improvement from the deficit of $406 million recorded in October and the $275-million deficit in the same month last year.

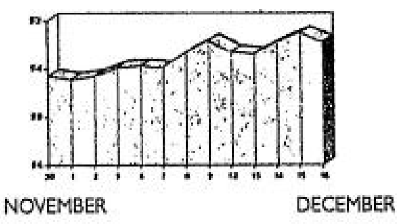
The January-to-November cumulative surplus of $2.16 billion was also a sharp turnaround from the $457-million deficit in the same period last year.

"The deficit is due mainly to debt servicing. Notwithstanding, this cumulative BOP sur-

BOP/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱53.45 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 16, 2005

¥116.02 = $1

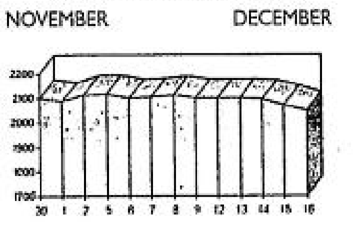
As of 5 p.m., Dec. 16, 2005

GOLD: $497.50-500.00

per ounce Hong Kong, Dec. 16, 2005

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Stocks fall 1.2% on coup rumors

STOCKS FELL YESTERDAY, WITH investors trimming their holdings ahead of the weekend as persistent coup rumors spurred security concerns, traders said.

The benchmark 30-company Philippine

STOCKS/ B2

An introduction to the most powerful letter of the alphabet:
M
M PZ 4051
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Sheer Driving Pleasure

The new BMW 5 Series M Sport. Performance in a Dynamic Business Suit.

BMW M signifies high performance and muscular aesthetic appeal – individual in appearance, sophisticated in technological substance.

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- **High-Performance Alloy Wheels with RFT (Run Flat Tires).** 18-inch Star Spoke cast aluminum wheels provide a more muscular look and enhanced road holding ability. Run Flat Tires provide increased safety and improved performance.
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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 16, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	32	33	32	33	152,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	54	54.5	54	54	1,259,500
China Banking Corp.	605	605	600	600	300
Citystate Savings Bank	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	500
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	300,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	54.5	55	54	55	76,200
International Exch. Bank	21.25	21.25	21.25	21.25	5,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32.5	33	32.5	33	735,600
Philippine National Bank	32	32	31.5	31.5	21,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	5,600
Security Bank Corp.	32	32	31.5	32	213,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	17,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	20,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	3120	3120	3120	3120	10
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	140	140	140	140	100
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2100	2100	2100	2100	100
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	77,800
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.89	0.9	0.89	0.9	720,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	740	740	720	720	27,150
Ipeople Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.85	2.85	35,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	10,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.35	3.4	3.3	3.4	2,118,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1770	1770	1745	1745	20,750
Ivantage Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	450,000
Philweb Corp.	0.015	0.016	0.015	0.016	118,800,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	15	15	15	15	50,200
Manila Electric Co. B	23	23	22.75	22.75	234,600
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.3	4,061,000
Petron Corp.	4.45	4.45	4.3	4.35	2,405,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.6	1.76	1.6	1.72	116,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	80,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	6,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	9.4	9.4	9.3	9.3	1,063,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	210,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	251,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	520,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.45	4.5	4.3	4.35	10,866,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	22.5	22.5	22	22	50,400
Jollibee Foods Corp.	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	360,200
Pancake House Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.6	3.6	24,000
RFM Corp.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64	64.5	64	64.5	106,500
San Miguel Corp. B	86	86	83.5	84	174,500
Universal Robina Corp.	18	18	18	18	27,100
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	312.5	315	302.5	307.5	307,070
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.44	110,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.75	4.8	4.75	4.8	241,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.08	2.08	2.08	2.08	259,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	150,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	275,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	300,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.14	5,654,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	450,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.32	6,820,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3	3.1	3	3.1	600,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	1,400,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	50,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	48	48.5	47	47.5	540,800
Global Business Hldgs Inc.	58	58	58	58	100
House Of Investments Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	150,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.25	3.25	829,000
Keppel Holdings	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	10,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	600,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.24	1,873,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	2,330,000
Paxys Inc.	5.8	5.9	5.7	5.8	493,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.26	1.28	220,000
SM Investments Corp.	245	245	237	240	136,260
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	200,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	10,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	3,330,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION& TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	60,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.99	0.99	0.97	0.98	2,550,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.44	293,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	300,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	13.5	13.5	12.75	13	618,500
DMCI Holdings Inc.- PREF.	1000	1000	1000	1000	87,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	8.9	9	8.9	9	50,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	9.6	9.7	9.5	9.6	4,613,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	218,000
C & P Homes Inc.	2.02	2.1	2	2.04	193,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	2,390,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.32	2,582,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	800,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	50,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.125	0.125	0.12	0.12	3,000,000
SM Development Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	20,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.6	23,735,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	50,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	47,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.8	5.9	5.6	5.9	161,000
Benguet Corp. A	7.5	7.5	7.2	7.2	13,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	10,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.22	0.215	0.215	6,090,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	5,260,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.02	48,100,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.029	0.03	0.029	0.03	15,100,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	26,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.3	1.3	1.28	1.3	920,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.6	1.64	1.58	1.64	3,987,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	28	28.5	27.5	28.5	272,300
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	105,000,000
Pacifica	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	5,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	30,000

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Surigao del Sur
City of Bislig

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The City Government of Bislig, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply of brand new Hydraulic Excavator with the following specifications:

Brief Description : 1 Unit Hydraulic Excavator (Brand New) with Bucket Capacity of 0.5 to 0.8 cu.m. with engine capacity of no less than 85 hp. Turbo charged with breaker piping attachment maximum digging reach from 7 to 8 meters from the ground, 500 to 600 mm triple grouser shoes, all weather steel cab fully air-conditioned with all-around visibility, safety glass windows, wide screen wiper, lockable doors, fully adjustable reclining seat, standard tools kit and manual with breaker attachment. F.O.B. BISLIG CITY.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bid Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its IRR-A.

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. ELIGIBILITY SCREENING	
a. Issuance of Eligibility Documents	8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. December 19-21, 2005 at the BAC Secretariat – CPDO, City Hall, Bislig City
b. Deadline of Submission of the accomplished eligibility documents / requirements	5:00 p.m. – December 22, 2005 at the BAC Secretariat – CPDO, City Hall Bislig City
2. Issuance of Bid Documents / RFQ	8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. – December 27, 2005 at the GSO, City Hall, Bislig City
3. Pre-bid Conference	2:00 p.m. – January 9, 2006 at the City Engineering Office, City Hall, Bislig City
4. Opening of Bids	3:00 p.m. – January 21, 2006 at the City Engineering Office, City Hall, Bislig City

The City Government of Bislig assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BAC of Bislig City reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) REYDANDE D. AZUCENA
BAC Chairman - Bislig City

(PDI – December 10 & 17, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Regional Office No. V
Pier Site, Legazpi City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Food Authority (NFA) in Region V, through its Regional Bids and Awards Committee (RBAC) invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the following projects:

	Project	Location	Brief Description	Approved Budget	Calendar days of Completion
Lot 1	Repair of Secondary Screen doors of GID 1 & 2 whse	Palestina, Pili, Cam. - Sur	Fabrication of new secondary doors	Php 278,717.43	60 cal. days
Lot 2	Repair of Primary doors of GID 1 & 2 whse	-do-	Fabrication of new 15 primary doors	Php 429,391.23	80 cal. days
Lot 3	Repair of Provincial Office Bldg.	-do-	Re-roofing	Php 491,203.11	90 cal. days
Lot 4	Repair of training center	-do-	Re-roofing/repainting and repair of ceiling	Php 718,024.24	100 cal. days
Lot 5	Repair of Balintawak whse	Balintawak, Naga City	Repair of wooden canopy and perimeter fence	Php 186,289.72	60 cal. days

The Schedule of RBAC activities are as follows:

ACTIVITIES	DATE	TIME
1. Issuance of Eligibility forms	December 19-27, 2005 to	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
2. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	December 22-29, 2005	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
3. Issuance of Bid Documents	January 4-11, 2006	8:00 AM 5:00 PM
4. Pre-bid Conference	January 12, 2006	10:00 AM
5. Deadline for Submission of Bid	January 24, 2006	9:30 AM
6. Opening of Bid	January 24, 2006	10:00 AM

Eligibility forms/requirements may be secured and submitted at the RBAC Secretariat upon submission of letter of intent (LOI) and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 500.00.

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB license applicable to the above type of contracts. Eligibility Criteria includes the value of the prospective bidders largest single contract within the last three (3) years, completed within the period and similar to the contract to be bid which must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the budget for the contract (ABC) to be bid and must have key personnel and equipment available for the prosecution of the contract.

The prospective bidders shall submit simultaneously two (2) envelopes, Envelope A containing Technical Proposal and Envelope B Containing Financial Proposal. Contents of each of the bid envelopes are specified in the Instruction to Bidders.

The RBAC will use the non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the eligibility check/screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The RBAC will conduct the post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid (LCB).

Bidding documents will be issued to eligible bidders only upon payment of non-refundable amount of Php 1,000.00 per lot.

The venue for the pre-bidding conference, submission and opening of eligibility requirements and bidding documents shall be at the conference room, second floor, NFA, Regional Office V, Pier Site, Legazpi City.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations-A (IRR-A).

Any eligible bidder can bid for one, a combination or all of the lots.

Other inquiries may be addressed to the RBAC Secretariat, NFA Region V, Legazpi City with Tel. No. (052) 480-7399/480-7015/480-7085/820-0018 and Fax No. (052) 480-7900.

NFA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

NFA reserves the right to reject any or all bids thereof, to waive any formalities or defects found therein, or to accept only such bids, or to award to any Contractor whose bid is considered most advantageous to NFA or to the government.

(Sgd.) JOSE B. GUEVARA
RBAC-Chairman

(PDI - Dec. 17 & 23, 2005)

Gov't debt . . .

From page B1

The Treasury noted that the foreign exchange rate used for the government's debt transactions in September was P56:$1 compared with the P56.20:$1 in August.

Meanwhile, the national government's contingent liabilities stood at P596.79 billion in September, or lower than the P607 billion recorded in August.

Contingent liabilities are debts incurred by state-owned companies that carry a sovereign guarantee. In case of default by the borrowing entity, a contingent debt would be shouldered by the national government.

The drop in the amount of contingent liabilities was due to debt payments by government entities..

Of the estimated P597 billion in contingent liabilities of the national government, P37.22 billion was owed to local creditors while P559.57 billion was due to foreign institutions, the Treasury documents showed.

Stocks . . .

From page B1

Stock Exchange Index lost 24.11 points, or 1.2 percent, to 2,047.56, after shedding 1.2 percent Thursday.

The commercial-industrial, all shares, property, and banks and financial services subindexes retreated, while the mining subindicator advanced. The oil subindex was unchanged. Decliners led gainers 45 to 16, while 47 stocks were unchanged.

Rumors of a coup attempt by disgruntled soldiers last weekend prompted authorities to beef up security at key military and police installations. President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson, Ignacio Bunye, dismissed such talk, stressing the military remains loyal to the president. *AP*

PUBLIC ESTATES AUTHORITY
7th & 8th Floors, Legaspi Towers 200 Bldg., 107 Paseo de Roxas St., Legaspi Village, 1228 City of Makati
Tel. Nos. (02) 817-4711 to 13, (02) 813-1441 to 45 • Facsimile No. (02) 816-2662
Website: www.pea.gov.ph • Email: info@pea.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites prospective bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project : Security Services for PRA Properties
Location : 7F Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
Brief Description : Engage the services of a security agency who shall secure and protect the PRA Office and its various properties
Approved Budget for the Contract : Php 12,710,000.00
Contract Duration : Twelve (12) Months

Prospective bidders should have undertaken similar project within the last three (3) years with amount not less than Php 12,710,000.00, and should have key personnel and equipment (i.e. whether owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum requirements for logistical support is included in the Terms of Reference. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall be undertaken using the non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-Qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

Below is the schedule of activities:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	December 12 – 19, 2005
2. Pre-Bid Conference	December 20, 2005
3. Opening of Bids	January 5, 2006
4. Bid Evaluation	January 6 – 18, 2006
5. Post Qualification	January 19 – 25, 2006
6. Notice of Award	February 9, 2006

Bid Documents will be available to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Twelve Thousand Seven Hundred Ten Pesos (Php 12,710.00) to the Philippine Reclamation Authority Cashier.

The Philippine Reclamation Authority assumes no responsibilities whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:
(SGD) JOSEFINA L. CASTRO
BAC Chairperson

(PDI--Dec. 10 & 17, 2005)

URC to raise ₱13B from sale of 635M shares

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

UNIVERSAL ROBINA CORP., THE branded food firm of taipan John Gokongwei Jr., plans to offer 634.8 million shares to international and local investors at a maximum of P18 a share.

The sale will bring in between P11.4 billion and P13 billion (roughly $214-$243 million) in proceeds, according to documents from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

URC president Lance Gokongwei said URC and selling shareholders might complete the sale by the first quarter next year.

URC shares closed at P18 apiece at the end of trading yesterday, down from a 30-day high of P18.50.

About 95 percent of the offering, or 603 million shares, will be sold to international investors, with the remaining 31.74 million shares set aside for domestic investors.

Among the selling shareholders are JG Summit Holdings Inc., Express Holdings Inc., Robinsons Supermarket Corp. and Arisaig Asean Fund Limited.

They stand to gain P6.3 billion from the sale of their existing shares to the public.

The rest of the offering will come from new shares to be issued by the company.

The SEC recently approved URC's registration statement for its local and international offering.

The registration statement showed that URC has the option to issue an additional 95.22 million shares which will increase the value of its offering to a maximum of P13 billion (roughly $243 million) or a total of 730 million shares.

URC will use part of the proceeds to bankroll P5.5 billion in capital expenses next year.

URC is spending P2.84 billion next year to expand its branded consumer food operations, largely on its beverage line, and further expansion overseas.

November . . .

From page B1

we were still way below the (deficit) program," Cruz said.

On the revenue side, the government generated more than what was targeted because of the increase in the Treasury's collection of dividends and guarantee fees from state-owned companies. Income collected by the Treasury more than offset the revenue shortfall of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), the government's main income earner.

The Treasury collected P6.1 billion during the month, more than double its P2.9-billion target. The BIR registered a P1-billion shortfall during the month as collections stood at P51 billion compared with the P52-billion goal.

Cruz said it was already unlikely for the BIR to meet its P546.9-billion target for the full year, although he noted that the revenue agency's collection still registered growth from the previous year.

The Bureau of Customs (BOC), the second-biggest revenue earner following the BIR, surpassed its P13-billion target for the month and collected P13.6 billion.

CURRENCIES

December 16, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.834934	1.000000	53.2340
Japan	Yen	0.007184	0.008604	0.4580
United Kingdom	Pound	1.473658	1.765000	93.9580
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.107704	0.128997	6.8670
Switzerland	Franc	0.647687	0.775735	41.2955
Canada	Dollar	0.720640	0.863111	45.9469
Singapore	Dollar	0.500650	0.599628	31.9206
Australia	Dollar	0.623923	0.747272	39.7803
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.215207	2.653153	141.2379
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.222643	0.266660	14.1954
Brunei	Dollar	0.499153	0.597836	31.8252
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000102	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.020414	0.024450	1.3016
UAE	Dirham	0.227329	0.272272	14.4941
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.197700	63.7584
Argentina	Peso	0.277387	0.332226	17.6857
Brazil	Real	0.363299	0.435123	23.1633
Denmark	Kroner	0.134195	0.160725	8.5560
India	Rupee	0.018440	0.022085	1.1757
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.221116	0.264831	14.0980
Mexico	New Peso	0.077759	0.093132	4.9578
New Zealand	Dollar	0.577848	0.692089	36.8427
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013969	0.016731	0.8907
South Africa	Rand	0.129904	0.155586	8.2825
Korea	Won	0.000825	0.000988	0.0526
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025165	0.030140	1.6045

BOP surplus hits $2.16B

From page B1

plus is still significantly higher than earlier projected," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said.

The BSP was earlier targeting a BOP surplus of only $853 million this year as against the $280-million deficit incurred in 2004.

"With strong OFW (overseas Filipino workers) and investment inflows, we expect the BOP to remain in a big surplus," added BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the domestic economy and the rest of the world. Its major components are the current account and the capital and financial account.

The current account records trade in goods and services as well as cash transfers such as from migrant workers, while the capital and financial accounts includes foreign investment flows.

Any transaction which gives rise to a payment by a Philippine resident like importation is a deficit item in the BOP while any transaction which gives rise to a receipt like exporting or inward remittance is a surplus item.

The monthly surpluses this year—particularly earned between February and September—were fueled by strong remittances from OFWs, foreign investment inflows, improved balance of trade, higher government external borrowings and improved investment income.

For instance, OFW inflows have grown by double-digit levels this year. The latest BSP report showed that remittances coursed through the banking system had reached $8.8 billion in the first 10 months of the year or 27.1 percent higher than the $6.9 billion posted a year ago.

German-Japan venture invests P200M to expand RP operations

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE SUBSIDIARY OF A GERMAN-Japanese joint venture is laying out an additional P200 million to expand its existing operation in the country.

The firm produces large-scale boilers used in power generation complexes.

The supercritical boilers, built only upon order for power plants, have generating capacities ranging from 600 megawatts to 1,200 megawatts.

Project proponent Babcock-Hitachi Philippines Inc. currently makes smaller boilers and their components are used in industrial plants like refineries, food processing, breweries and sugar mills.

Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez said the project, which would be built in Batangas, would be the Babcock group's third high-capacity boiler facility in the world.

On Tuesday, Hernandez said the BOI had approved tax perks for seven projects worth about P164.9 million through its one-day approval process.

He said last week's approval brought the number of projects under the simplified registration procedure to 51, amounting to a total of P37 billion.

Peso breaks holiday rally, ends at 53.45

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY PULLED BACK FROM its Christmas rally as banks scrambled to lock in trading gains, ending at 53.45 yesterday from Thursday's 53.25 against the US dollar.

Currency traders said the peso was hardly affected by persistent coup rumors and security concerns that spooked the stock market. But it was seen to have given up some gains as the cheaper exchange rate created demand for the US dollars and triggered profit-taking among offshore currency dealers.

The peso opened at 53.25, hit an intra-day high of 54.175 before closing at the day's low of 53.45 against the greenback. Volume turnover at the spot foreign exchange market stood at $408.06 million.

On the other hand, the benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange composite index also shed 24.11 points, or 1.2 percent, to 2047.56.

Marcelo Ayes, chief currency trader at Equitable PCIBank, said that at this time of the month, inflows from overseas Filipino workers would have dried up. But he added that it would likely surge again from the 19th onwards.

While the US dollar had been oversold, traders said the market was really bound for a correction. The market is expected to test the 53.60 up to 53.80 barrier against the peso.

After the holidays, Ayes said OFW inflows would not be too strong in January and February.

"We have to watch out for the implementation of the EVAT (Expanded value added tax) by February," he said.

The implementation of the VAT, a key fiscal reform measure that is expected to stabilize the government's finances, has been a source of optimism among foreign investors who invest in Philippine assets.

On Thursday, the peso reached a high of 53.16—its strongest level in nearly three years—on speculation that the Monetary Board might hike its overnight interest rates that day.

But the BSP kept its policy rates. The key overnight borrowing and lending rates stood at 7.50 percent and 9.75 percent, respectively.

Globe offers 10¢ per second call rate

By Clarissa S. Batino

GLOBE TELECOM INC. IS FUELING another round of price war with today's launch of its 10-centavo per second of call promo for prepaid or postpaid subscribers.

The new promo, which initially will run until Jan. 15, will "revolutionize" pricing in the industry, Globe officials said.

Globe will charge on a per second basis for within-network calls, bucking the industry practice of rounding off calls to the next minute and frustrating customers who used up only a few seconds and yet were billed for a full minute.

Today, Globe subscribers who want to place cheaper calls may dial 232, plus the 10-digit Globe mobile number of the person they want to call.

"This new pricing is best for customers because it gives them the lowest rate, while we maintain quality service," a Globe executive said.

Globe prepaid subscribers currently pay P6.50 a minute for within-network calls, and P7.50 a minute on calls to other networks.

Postpaid subscribers pay a range of P3.50 a minute to P6 a minute (depending on the plan) for within-network calls, and between P4.50 a minute to P7 a minute for calls from Globe to other networks.

Globe ended the third quarter with 12.4 million subscribers.

With the new promo, a full minute of call will cost only P6.

Globe's competitors are not expected to readily adopt the same pricing scheme, according to a Globe executive.

"It will be difficult for the others to copy (the pricing scheme) immediately," the official said. "I don't think they have a software and revenue impact study."

Globe said that its other promos, such as Txt Nonstop, are still ongoing. Last September, it allowed postpaid subscribers to avail themselves of Txt Nonstop.

Txt Nonstop allows unlimited texting for P15 for a day, P25 for 2 days and P50 for 5 days.

Third-player Sun Cellular has been wrangling subscribers from dominant players Globe and Smart Communications Inc. by offering attractive pricing packages.

But Sun Cellular appears to be losing steam. Recently, it asked the National Telecommunications Commission to approve a plan to impose one-hour limit to its supposedly unlimited call and text pricing plan called 24/7.

Sun Cellular, which set off a price war in the industry with its bucket pricing, said this was only meant to curb abuses resulting in network congestion during peak hours.

Sun officials said the new policy was not a departure from the unlimited plan.

Once the "fair use policy" takes effect, a Sun prepaid subscriber will have a maximum of one hour of talk time between 6 p.m. and midnight.

"In the event that the subscriber exceeds the cumulative usage of one hour, the unlimited calling service shall be disabled for the remainder of the peak period," Sun Cellular said in its letter to the NTC. "It will be made available again (at the start) of the next day."

Calls during off peak hours are automatically cut after several minutes.

But the subscriber may redial as many times as he wants to.

Bayantel completes roll out of next generation network

BAYAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS INC. yesterday has completed its nationwide roll-out of its Next Generation Network that will allow it to deliver integrated voice, data and video services through an Internet Protocol.

With the advanced network, the Lopez-controlled phone company said it would offer high-quality yet cost effective Internet-based services such as DSL or high-speed Internet and Voice over IP.

The three-phase project started in late 2004, according to the phone unit of Benpres Holdings Corp.

The first phase covered major nodes in Metro Manila, including Quezon City, Ortigas, and Makati.

The second phase involved the deployment of major nodes in Cebu and Davao, as well as in Naga, Legaspi, Tacloban, Iloilo, Dumaguete, Butuan, GenSan, Cagayan de Oro, Iligan, and Baguio.

The third phase involved the activation of an IP switch that allowed Bayantel to offer carrier-grade voice services anywhere in the country.

"We are now ready to deploy disruptive technologies that spell tremendous benefits and features to customers, resulting in improved network efficiency, reduced operating costs, and higher quality of service to customers," Bayantel's chief consultant Tunde Fafunwa said in a statement.

Recently, the Benpres subsidiary submitted a P300-million performance bond to the National Telecommunications Commission to acquire one of five allocated third-generation or 3G frequency bands.

The NTC said it will award the five 3G frequencies early next year to players technically and financially capable of rolling out and operating the new mobile phone technology. *Clarissa S. Batino*

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Altis 1.8 E A/T	878,000	100,000	66,500	45,836	36,536	26,072	21,038	18,160
Altis 1.6 E A/T	800,000	100,000	59,539	41,000	32,688	23,326	18,822	16,244
Altis 1.6 E M/T	765,000	100,000	56,386	38,831	30,962	22,094	17,828	15,385
Altis 1.6 J M/T	708 000	100,000	51 257	35,297	28 150	20,088	16 209	13 985

MODEL	SRP	DOWNPAYMENT	12	18	24	36	48	60
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Innova 2.5 G M/T	980,000	100,000	76,188	52,466	41,807	29,834	24,073	20,787
Innova 2.0 G A/T	985,000	100,000	76,038	52,776	42,054	30,010	24,215	20,910
Innova 2.0 G M/T	930,000	100,000	71,087	49,366	38,341	28,074	22,653	19,559
Innova 2.5 E M/T	885,000	100,000	67,636	46,576	37,121	28,489	21,374	18,454
Innova 2.5 J M/T	798,000	100,000	59,804	41,183	32,829	23,427	18,903	16,317
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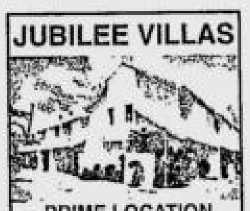

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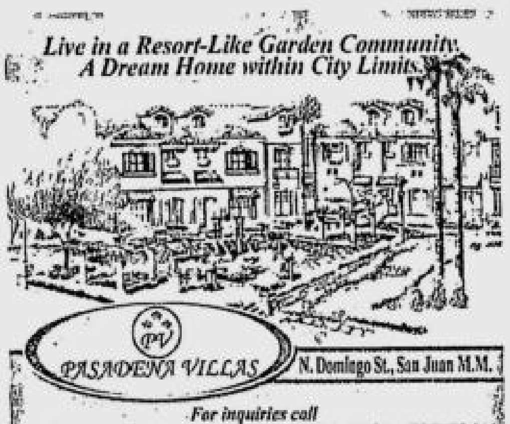

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PUBLIC NOTICES

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#7611 Caeg Bldg., dela Rosa St., Makati City; #602 JP Rizal St. Makati City; #15 Gen Santos Ave., Lower Bicutan Taguig; Real St. Almanza Uno Las Pinas City will hold an Auction Sale on December 24, 2005 at 9:00 AM. Including all items pawned up to July 2005
V. Zamora Jr. Lic. Auctioneer

CATHAY PACIFIC

Cathay Pacific Airways, Ltd.
Is in immediate need of an

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Qualifications:

- Graduate of a 4-year college degree, preferably in Communication Arts, Marketing or Management course
- 3-5 years of supervisory/managerial experience gained from leading brands in the service industry
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Interested Applicants may submit their comprehensive resume with passport size photo by email addressed to The Personnel Manager, email address MNLELZ@cathaypacific.com. Please indicate **ASST MANAGER-MKTG** vacancy as the subject/title of the email on or before 23 December2005.

CATHAY PACIFIC

Cathay Pacific Airways, Ltd.
Is in immediate need of a

PASSENGER SALES MANAGER

Qualifications:

- Graduate of a 4-year college degree, preferably in Management-related course.
- 6-8 years of supervisory/managerial experience.
- Leadership, assertiveness and outstanding negotiation skills.
- Excellent numeracy and analytical skills
- Effective planning and problem solving skills. Good time management.
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Interested applicants may submit their comprehensive resume with passport-size photo by email addressed to The Personnel Manager, email address MNLELZ@cathaypacific.com. Please indicate **SALES MANAGER** vacancy as the title of the email on or before 21December2005.

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that CHINA BANKING CORP. Cert. No. 16169 for TWO HUNDRED FIFTEEN (215) shares issued in the name of INVESTORS SECURITIES, INC. was reported lost. If no contest received new certificate will be issued.

(PDI – Dec. 10, 17 & 24, 2005)

LEGAL NOTICE

AN EXTRA JUDICIAL PARTITION HAS BEEN FILED BY THE HEIRS OF THE LATE EUSTAQUIO C. IGNACIO WHO DIED INTESTATE ON JAN. 27, 1970, BERNABE I. SANTOS WHO DIED INTESTATE ON JULY 23, 1992, AND BENJAMIN C. DAVID WHO DIED INTESTATE ON AUGUST 20, 2002, ALL AT TAGUIG METRO MANILA LEAVING SIX (6) PARCELS OF LAND DESCRIBED AS TCT NOS 20033R, 20034R, 20035R, 20036R, AND 20037R, ALL SITUATED AT PULONG MABA PORAC, PAMPANGA. SWORN TO BEFORE NOTARY PUBLIC PORFORIO M. BAUTISTA OF PARAÑAQUE CITY UNDER DOC. # 135 PAGE # 28 BOOK # 1 SERIES OF 2003.
(PDI - DEC. 10, 17 & 24, 2005)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Imelda Guevarra Parafina who died on Dec. 1, 2005 in QC and Jaime Villanueva Parafina who died on Oct. 25, 1999 in Muntinlupa Med. Cntr. where both extrajudicially settled in accordance with the extrajudicial settlement with self adjudication of estate by self heir duly executed before Notary Public Atty Arleen A. Salvacion of QC per Doc 497 Page 101 Book X Series 2005
(PDI-Dec. 17, 24 & 31, 2005)

Notice is hereby given that the Estate of the late Lilia M. Roque consisting of her rights and interests on real properties covered by TCT Nos. 420182 and 70867 located at Merville Park and Barrio Ibayo, Paranaque City respectively, was extrajudicially distributed among her heirs, Honesto P. Roque, Honesto Roque Jr., Hernani Roque, Joy Roque Hensey & Maria Juvy R. Libao, by means of a public instrument executed on Nov. 30, 2005 and ratified before Atty. Edgar F. Chavez, Notary Public, for and in Makati City as per Document No. 109, Page No. 23, Book No. I, Series of 2005.
(PDI-Dec. 3, 10 & 17, 2005)

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2 studies say osteoporosis drug has other benefits

By Charles E. Buban

IF YOU ARE TAKING the drug raloxifene because you have osteoporosis, this might be a piece of good news for you: two successive studies have found that the drug may also significantly reduce one's risk of developing breast cancer.

These findings came from the trials Multiple Outcomes of Raloxifene Evaluation (MORE) and the Continuing Outcomes Relevant to Evista (CORE).

Lasting eight years, the two trials involved more than 4,000 postmenopausal women who had osteoporosis.

"These two findings are very encouraging. They are significant because they may lead to another option to help high risk women," said Dr. Lilia Luna, a senior consultant at the FEU-Dr. Nicanor Reyes Medical Foundation Medical Center's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Currently, women with breast cancer that is responsive to hormonal treatment and who have gone through menopause are advised to take tamoxifen for five years. But tamoxifen can have side effects, including cancer of the womb lining and blood-clotting disorders, and there is a chance that the breast cancer would spread or return.

Because of this, raloxifen is often prescribed by some doctors in place of tamoxifen because it has shown to be as effective as tamoxifen in preventing breast cancer without the side effects of the latter.

Risk reduced by 72%

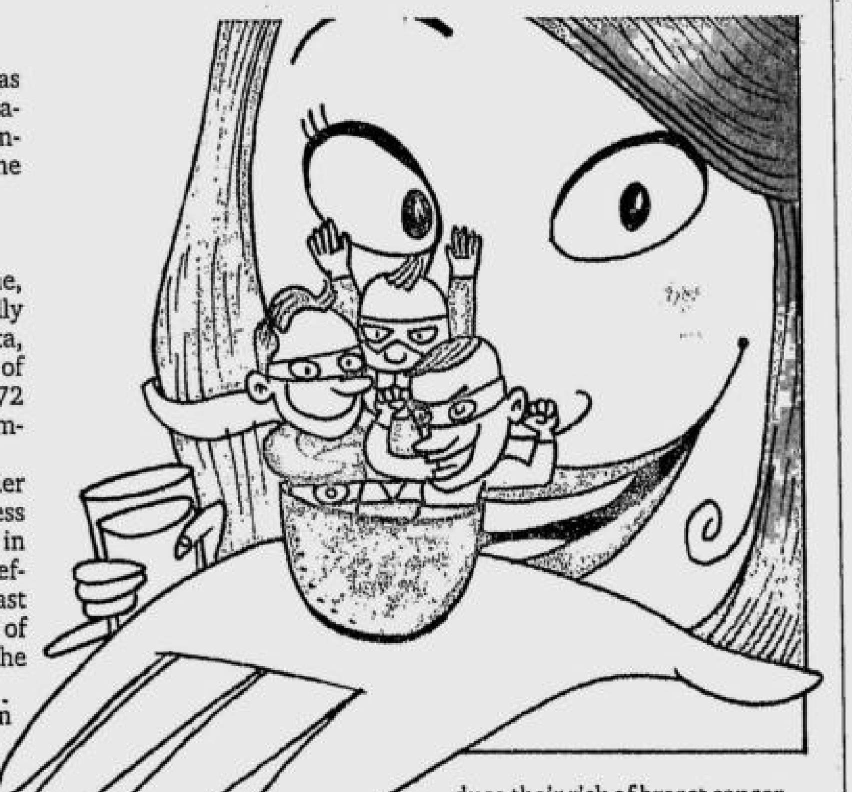
In the MORE trial, raloxifene, originally developed by Eli Lilly under the brand name Evista, was shown to reduce the risk of breast cancer incidence by 72 percent over four years, compared to placebo.

The CORE trial, on the other hand, was a follow up to assess the effectiveness of raloxifene in treating osteoporosis and how effective it was in reducing breast cancer risk in the same group of women who took part in the MORE trial.

The CORE trial found that in the last four years, the incidence of invasive breast cancer for women taking raloxifene was reduced by 59 percent compared with women taking a placebo, and the incidence of estrogen-receptor (ER)-positive invasive breast cancer was reduced by 66 percent.

Over eight years, the incidence of invasive breast cancer was reduced by 66 percent and that of ER-positive invasive breast cancer by 76 percent.

Invasive breast cancer refers to cancer cells that have broken through the mammary duct and have spread to nearby normal tissues; ER-positive breast cancer refers to cancer cells that need the hormone estrogen to grow.



"The results of these studies reinforce the safety profile of raloxifene over an extended period of time, providing doctors and patients with information they need to weigh the risks and benefits of treatment and decide if the drug is right for that person," said Luna.

2 more studies

Although raloxifene shows promise as a breast cancer prevention drug, Luna said it was too early to recommend the drug for postmenopausal women to reduce their risk of breast cancer.

She said two large trials with raloxifene are now underway: the Study of Tamoxifen and Raloxifene (STAR) and Raloxifene Use for The Heart (RUTH).

The STAR trial will determine whether raloxifene is as effective in reducing the chance of developing breast cancer as tamoxifen, while the RUTH trial will compare the drug with a placebo in preventing breast cancer and heart problems.

Luna said results of these trials should provide a more conclusive answer to the question of whether or not postmenopausal women at high risk for breast cancer would benefit from raloxifene.

Mango and arthritis

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

ARMANDO AMPIL [armando_ampil@yahoo.com] writes: "I am an avid reader of your column. Your piece last Aug. 27 caught my attention because you mentioned mangoes. I would greatly appreciate it if you could write on the healing properties of mango on arthritis."

The most we can say at this point is that according to a study at the University of Manchester, people who consume foods high in vitamin C (such as raw mango) have a lower risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis.

There are other more controversial studies, such as on Vimang, a substance obtained from mango, which Cuban researchers claim to be a natural antioxidant (and anti-inflammatory). Vimang supposedly is superior to vitamin C and beta-carotene in trials, but I have not found these findings in peer-reviewed journals, so I cannot recommend this.

Perhaps you were thinking of mangosteen (xango) juice. According to the Mayo Clinic, mangosteen is known for its antioxidants, especially xanthones. Lab tests show that mangosteen juice can stop the growth of some bacteria and fungi. However, there is no published data that this can help in arthritis.

Choosing to teach

Wilbert Sy [w_syling@edsamail.com.ph] says: "You were a guest speaker on two occasions at Uno High School. One engagement was for students while the more recent one was for teachers. I found your insights valuable and useful because as a new teacher, I really could use tips that may help my students learn more. I have a business management degree and at first helped manage the family business. After some years, I thought of shifting gears. I went back to school, took the required units in education and hurdled the prescribed Licensure Exam for Teachers. I never regretted any minute of my new job. I chose to teach and I'm enjoying it. I probably derived more satisfaction when I saw my students learning a new concept than closing a sale."

I know how you feel, since I prefer to stay in education rather than in business. I am happy that you are enjoying what you do. Please stay in the field, we need dedicated and motivated instructors for our youth.

As for math teaching tips, please refer to my books "Eureka!," "Eskimo Pi" and "Arithmetricks," available at National Bookstore. Or call Anvil at 637-5141 to order directly. I also write a monthly column for the Philippine Journal of Education with more tips for teachers. Your library probably has copies. To subscribe, call 726-5463 or e-mail pje2000@pworld.net.ph. God bless your mission.

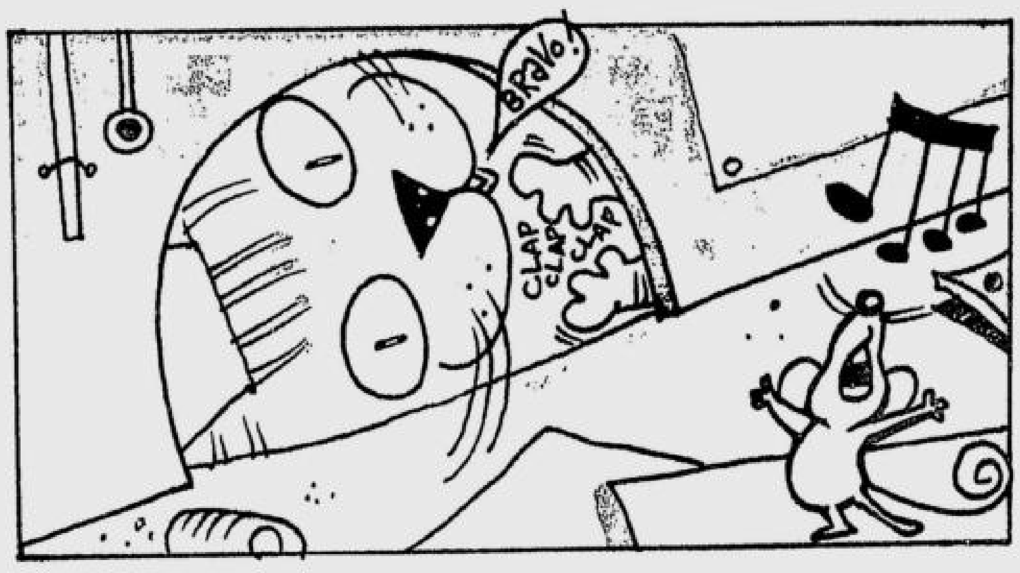
Ethanol

Good news! The Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research, headed by Dr. William C. Medrano, promoted a newly developed sweet sorghum variety, ICV 93046, to produce ethanol. The ethanol can be blended with petrol and diesel to produce gasohol.

Sweet sorghum (Sorghum bicolor) is mainly used for industrial use and animal feeds. But because of its wide adaptability, rapid growth, and high potential, sweet sorghum may become more popular. It is also tolerant to drought, soil salinity, and acidity toxicity.

The pilot study found that sweet sorghum is the best alternative raw material to supplement the use of sugarcane in ethanol production. At 5,600 liters per hectare per year, ethanol production from sweet sorghum compares well with the 6,500 liters from sugarcane. To top it off, the production process does not harm the environment. In this time of high fuel prices, let us hope that sorghum would prove a useful alternative.

E-mail the author at blessbook@yahoo.com.



Let nature sing

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

JULIE ANDREWS WASN'T KIDDING WHEN she sang about the hills and the sound of music, but she didn't have it quite right either.

From the Fielax Gmbh and the Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research comes news that icebergs apparently sing as well. The brief report appeared in the Nov. 25 issue of the journal Science and was authored by Dr. Christian Müller of the private firm Fielax GmbH, which specializes in marine science and technology.

The gift of song seems to be one bestowed upon many animate things, which leads to the question: what constitutes a song? While the definition varies, it is generally agreed that there must be rhythm and repeated musical phrases or motifs. For example, most songs on the radio are composed of a set tempo and several stanzas whose lyrics follow an ABCB rhyme scheme.

Granted that bird song and whale song are less likely to follow that pattern, but they do have rhythms and tonal qualities all their own.

Seismic tremors

The singing iceberg is named B-09A. In 2000, researchers recorded several months of seismic tremors at the Neumayer Base in Antarctica. It was originally thought that the tremors were volcanic in origin, but by comparing satellite images with earthquake data, it was revealed that the vibrations were actually caused by the very large B-09A.

The vibrations had harmonic overtones that turned out to be caused by water flowing through the tunnels in the iceberg, turning it into something akin to a frozen pipe organ that played single notes at very low registers for several hours. In one instance, in July 22, 2000, the iceberg collided with the continental slope several times over 16 hours, causing the iceberg's harmonic overtones to be recorded for 13 hours.

The information gained from studying the singing iceberg could be useful in understanding volcanoes. By studying the vibration patterns of the simpler icebergs, researchers hope to gain insights into how volcanic activity is triggered.

Singing mice

Sadly, the singing iceberg is a misnomer. But last month also brought reports of singing mice. While the mice do possess both musical phrasing and rhythms, their songs aren't masterpieces like those of, say, a nightingale.

In the Nov. 1 issue of the free-access journal Public Library of Science Biology (PLoSBiology), researchers at the Washington University School of Medicine note that rodents make sounds that can be heard by the human ear, but they can also sing at ultrasonic frequencies, which aren't as easily heard.

Researchers Timothy Holy and Zhongsheng Guo said rodent noises are sometimes actually songs, with discernible musical phrases and tempos. Interestingly, the rodent songs were heard in two situations: when females were detected nearby (in this case represented by vials of female mouse urine) and when the rodent pups were cold and alone.

"Perhaps the best analogy for mouse song would be the song of juvenile birds, which put forth what you might call proto-motifs and themes," said Holy, an assistant professor of neurobiology and anatomy, in a press release.

The social benefits of mouse vocalizations aren't immediately obvious and will likely be part of follow-on studies. It helps that the mouse genome has been completed; by knowing what genetic factors might explain the physical behavior of why mice sing, similar behaviors in other animals can be studied at a more focused level.

Pain Medicine fellowship open to physicians

THE PAIN MANAGEMENT CENTER OF ST. Luke's Medical Center is now accepting applications for its 2-year Pain Medicine fellowship program.

The program is open to all physicians who have finished an accredited training program in anesthesiology, rehab medicine, family medicine, psychiatry and internal medicine.

Other specialties are also considered depending on the candidate's qualifications.

It is highly preferred that the applicant must have passed his primary specialty board exam. Fellowship starts January 2006 up to December 2007.

Pain Medicine is a new specialty in the country. The fellowship program envisions to produce a well-rounded subspecialist who can deal satisfactorily with patients having pain problems that have been passed on from one physician to another.

Interested parties may call the Pain Management Center, St. Luke's Medical Center at 7230101 local 4403 or 5416 or at 091-8068095 (Dr. Don Ledres).

Quicksand myth debunked

SCIENTISTS HAVE GIVEN THE LIE TO THE hoary scene in Westerns in which a cowboy slowly drowns in quicksand or alternatively is cast a lifeline by a buddy and gets hauled to safety.

Physicists in the Netherlands, who built a miniature quicksand in their lab. discovered that quicksand becomes more viscous very slowly: it takes days for the substance to become progressively more toffee-like in consistency.

On the other hand, it loses this viscosity very quickly in response to stress. A moving object in the sand causes it to liquefy swiftly, as the sand heads towards the bottom and the upper layers become runny. The settling sand then becomes so compact that it is impossible for material with the density of a human body to become completely submerged.

So an ensnared cowboy should take solace in that he won't drown, the study suggests. On the other hand, he is likely to stay there for a long time, for even the most muscular help won't get him out.

The dense sand so clumps around the lower limbs that just to haul out a foot requires a force of 100,000 Newtons, about the same as that needed to lift a medium-sized car. *AFP*

ASK THE DENTIST
Paul R. De Castro, DMD

Chewing pencils

I HAVE A HABIT OF CHEWING pencils. Unfortunately for me, I didn't know that this was wearing out my tooth. Why didn't my tooth hurt?—Steve P.

Chewing hard objects such as pencils or ice can wear out your teeth and could hurt if the damage is beyond your enamel, the first layer of your tooth. The damage in your tooth probably has not reached the second layer, which is why your tooth did not hurt. You can repair the damage with bonding or a tooth-colored filling.

E-mail your questions at dentalqs@yahoo.com.

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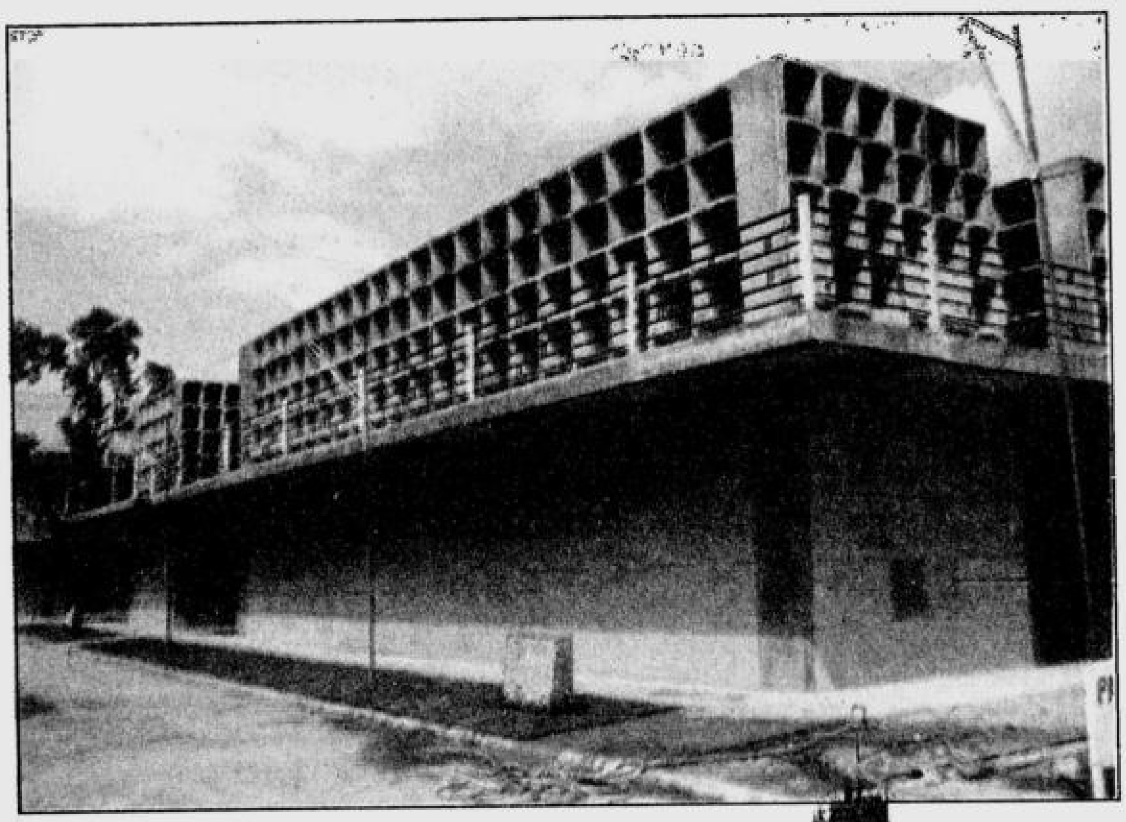

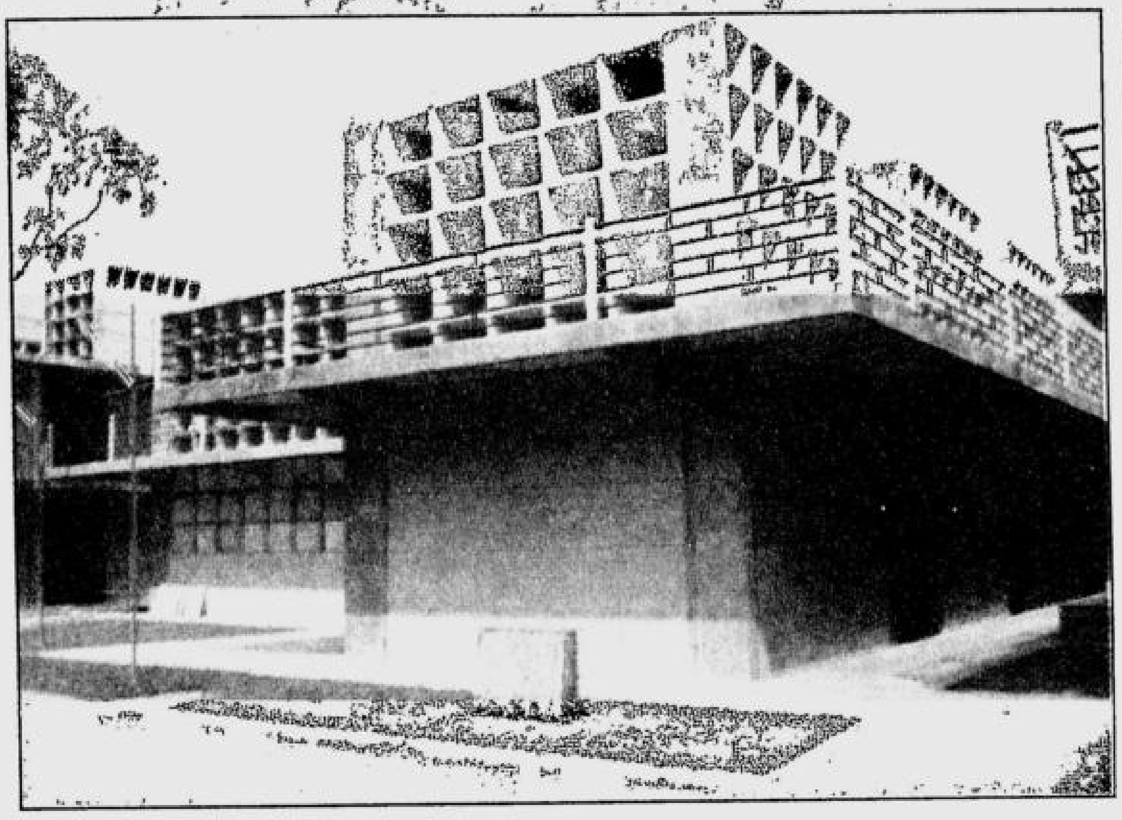

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Lamberto F. Almeda

Founding Chief, Intelligence Division
Bureau of Immigration

Peacefully joined the Lord
on December 16, 2005 at the age of 78.

His loving wife, **Lily**; his children **Danny** & **Baby**, **Delfin** (†) & **Baby**, **Natoy** & **Marisse**, **Susan** and **Ven (Aduana)**, **Jun** & **Tina**, **Lulu** & **Tony (Santiago)**, **Tere** & **Jojo** (**Yap**) and **Nani** & **Daydin**; his sisters, **Dr. Adelaida Almeda Temporal** and **Carmen Almeda Viñas**; his loving grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, December 20, 2005 at Biñan Catholic Cemetery, Laguna after the 9:30 a.m. Mass at Santuario de San Antonio Church.

In his last battle, he did his heroes,
Napoleon and Lancelot, proud.

Edgardo Sicangco Cruz

9 February 1948 - 14 December 2005

His children, **Kay**, **Buddie**, **Lance**, **Stephen** and **Nicole**, brothers, sister and in-laws, **Elfren** and **Neni**, **Chari** and **Pete**, **Chuck** and **Ching**, and **Alex**, and other relatives request prayers for Ed's eternal repose.

His mortal remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque. Interment follows the 8:15 a.m. Mass on Sunday, December 18, at Loyola Memorial Park, Parañaque.

Message of Thanks

We, the family and relatives of the late

ENGR. GUMERSINDO O. AGUSTIN

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on December 1, 2005

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and who in countless ways condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

"Even
when I walk
through
a dark
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no harm.
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are at
my side,
your rod
and staff
give me
courage..."
Psalm 23:4

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
BRANCH 90, QUEZON CITY

IN THE MATTER OF: THE
PETITION FOR CORPORATE
REHABILITATION WITH PRAYER FOR
SUSPENSION OF PAYMENTS,

SPECIAL PROCEEDING NO. Q-05-136

RUVIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION,
Petitioner.
x-----------------------------------x

STAY ORDER

Before this Court is a verified Petition for corporate rehabilitation with prayer for a Stay Order filed by the above-named petitioner.

Briefly, the petitioner alleges that despite the fact that it has total assets of PhP 105,362,400.00, it has encountered cash flow problems which prevent it from paying its obligations. The proposed rehabilitation plan calls for the payment of its obligations for a term of six (6) years with a grace period of one (1) year on interest and two (2) years on principal repayment, with waiver of penalties, interest at 6% per annum, among other things, because of expected "approximate gross revenue of PhP 942,516,450.00". Consequently, the petitioner prays for the issuance of a Stay Order pending proceedings before this Court.

A careful examination of the Petition shows that the same comforms substantially with Section 2, Rule 4 of the Interim Rules of Procedure on Corporate Rehabilitation (*see also* Supreme Court Resolution en banc in A.M. No. 00-8-10-SC). This Court therefore finds the Petition to be sufficient in form and substance.

IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, this Court issues a Stay Order, in accordance with Section 6, Rule 4 of the aforecited Interim Rules, as follows:

1.) Appointing Mr. Osmenio R. Galapate who is a Certified Public Accountant, as rehabilitation receiver who shall be considered as an officer of the court and who shall have the powers, duties and functions as provided in Section 14, Rule 4 of the aforecited Interim Rules. The rehabilitation receiver must post a bond of PhP 150,000.00 before entering upon his powers, duties and functions and must take an oath, as provided under Section 15, Rule 4 of the aforecited Interim Rules. The petitioner is directed to serve immediately a copy of this Stay Order upon the rehabilitation reciever, Mr. Osmenio R. Galapate who shall manifest his acceptance or non-accceptance or his appointment not later than five (5) days from his receipt hereof;

2.) Staying enforcement of all claims, whether for money or otherwise and whether such enforcement is by court action or otherwise, against the petitioner, and its guarantors and sureties not solidarily liable with the petitioner including the staying of proceedings of collection cases filed against petitioner, and the staying of the enforcement/implementation of application/s for extra-judicial foreclosure sale/s and actual foreclosure sale/s, if any, against the real and personal properties of the petitioner.

3.) Prohibiting the petitioner from selling, encumbering, transferring, or disposing in any manner any of its properties except in the ordinary course of business;

4.) Prohibiting the petitioner from making any payment of its liabilities outstanding as at the date of the filing of the Petition on November 30, 2005;

5.) Prohibiting the suppliers of the petitioner from withholding supply of goods and services in the ordinary course of business for as long as the petitioner makes payments for the services and goods supplied after the issuance of this Stay Order

6.) Directing the petitioner to pay in full all administrative expenses incurred after the issuance of this Stay Order.

The initial hearing on the Petition is set on January 13. 2006 (Friday) at 2:00 P.M. at the session room of Branch 90 of this Court located at the Ground Floor of the Hall of Justice Building, Quezon City Hall complex, Quezon City. In the event the initial hearing does not push through for any reason like there is no work on said date, the hearing shall be reset automatically to January 19, 2006 (Thursday) at 2:00 P.M. All creditors and all interested parties including the Securities and Exchange Commission are directed to file with this Court and serve upon the petitioner a verified comment on or opposition to the Petition, with supporting affidavits and documents, not later than ten (10) days before the date of the initial hearing as set forth above, and they are put on notice that their failure to do so will bar them from participating in the proceedings before this Court. All creditors and all interested parties are further directed to secure from this Court copies of the Petition and its annexes within such time as to enable them to file their verified comment on or opposition thereto and to prepare them for the initial hearing and to attain this purpose, the petitioner is ordered to file with this Court initially five (5) additional copies of the Petition and its annexes within ten (10) days from receipt hereof.

The petitioner is furthermore directed by this Court to have a copy of this Order published in the business section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer and one other newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines chosen by raffle if it is a newspaper other than the herein-named newspaper considering the probable presence of numerous creditors and interested parties, once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks, with the last publication effected at least three (3) weeks prior to the date of initial hearing as set forth above, at the expense of the petitioner.

The OIC, Branch Clerk of Court, is ordered to see to it that the Process Server shall serve immediately copies of this Stay Order upon: 1) Ms. Ma. Victoria A. Reyes (the chairman and chief executive officer of the petitioner), c/o Ruvic Development Corporation, No. 11 Miller Street, San Francisco del Monte, Quezon City; 2) Atty. Manuel M. Cosico (counsel for the petitioner), 30th Floor, Citibank Tower, 8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City; 3) Mr. Osmenio R. Galapate (the rehabilitation receiver), 27 Allah Street, NIA Village, Barangay Pasong Tamo, Quezon City; and 4) the Honorable Chairman, Securities and Exchange Commission, EDSA (Epifanio De Los Santos Avenue), Mandaluyong City.

SO ORDERED.

Quezon City, December 7, 2005.

(Sgd.) **REYNALDO B. DAWAY, C.P.A.**
Presiding Judge

(PDI--Dec. 17, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
National Capital Region
U.N. Avenue, Manila

Invitation to Register, Apply for Eligibility and to Bid For Trucking/Hauling Services

1. The National Food Authority, National Capital Region, U.N. Avenue, Paco, Manila, through the Approved Corporate Budget for Calendar Year 2006, intends to apply the sum of SEVENTY THREE MILLION ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY EIGHT THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED FIFTY PESOS (P73,188,350.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for Trucking/Hauling Services. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall automatically be rejected at Bid Opening.

2. The National Food Authority – National Capital Region invites all interested qualified trucking/hauling service operators to register, apply for eligibility and to bid for trucking/hauling services for the hauling of 307,500 metric tons, more or less of NFA imported rice from the NFA-NCR designated unloading terminals (South/North Harbor) to its different warehouses located in Manila, Rizal and Cavite provinces with an Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) aforestated and broken down as follows:

LOT NO.	ROUTE/ DESTINATION	ESTIMATED VOLUME (MT)		APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT
I	NCR Installation and Warehouses within 31 km radius	225,400	MT more or less	P 52,969,000
II	Manila to GID-Antipolo	49,450	MT more or less	P 11,966,900
III	Manila to Cardona, Rizal	1,000	MT more or less	P 245,000
IV	Manila to Cavite	31,650	MT more or less	P 8,007,450
	TOTAL	307,500	MT	P 73,188,350

Application forms and list of requirements for registration can be secured from the Regional Bids and Awards Committee (RBAC) Secretariat after payment of a non-refundable registration fee of PESO TWO THOUSAND (P2,000.00).

Only operators with Certificate of Official Registration issued by NFA-NCR RBAC may apply for eligibility and to bid for NFA Trucking/Hauling Services. The Description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents, Instruction to Bidders (ITB) and in the General Terms and Conditions.

The schedule of activities are as follows:

ACTIVITIES	DATE/TIME
1. Issuance of application for Registration Requirements	December 19 to 29, 2005 – 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
2. Deadline for submission of registration Requirements & issuance of certificate of official registration	Not later than January 6, 2005 – 3:00 PM
3. Issuance of application for Eligibility & List of Requirements (Bidding Documents)	January 6 to 10, 2005 – 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
4. Pre-Bidding Conference	January 11, 2006 – 10:00 AM
5. Bidding Proper	January 23, 2006 – 10:00 AM

3. Bidding shall be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing, Rules and Regulations (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184) and is restricted to organizations with at least 60% interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183); Only bids of bidders who passed the eligibility check will be opened. The process for eligibility check is described in the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the lowest calculated bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine his responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by the prospective Bidders (with Certificates of Registration issued by the RBAC) from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of TEN THOUSAND PESOS (P10,000.00). The method of payment will be in Cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

5. The National Food Authority, National Capital Region, reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Food Authority – National Capital Region
U.N. Avenue, Paco Manila
Telephone No.: 563-94-37
Fax No.: 563-94-65

(Sgd.) **Atty. BASILIDES TACO**
Asst. Regional Director &
Chairman, BAC, NFA-NCR

(PDI – December 17 & 24, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
City Government of Zamboanga
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
City Hall, Zamboanga City
Tel. No. (062) 992-7763

SF-GOOD-05
SOL No CL–05-12-0387

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The *City Government of Zamboanga*, through its Bids and Awards Commitee (BAC), invites suppliers / manufacturers / distributors / contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Contract	*Location / Office*	*Brief Description*	*Approved Budget for the Contract*	*Contract Duration / P.R. No*	*Delivery Period*
1 Security Services	CEO-Motorpool	Security Guards	694,368.00	100-06-01-002	January 1, 2006 to December 31,2006
	CGSO		5,092,032.00	100-06-01-003	
	CSWDO		347,184.00	100-06-01-004	
	OSSP		347,184.00	100-06-01-005	
	SP		694,368.00	100-06-01-006	
	CMO-Sports		810,096.00	100-06-01-007	
	Civil Registrar		347,184.00	100-06-01-008	
	City Environment & Natural Resources		1,735,920.00	100-06-01-009	
	City Agriculture		347,184.00	100-06-01-012	
	Admin.-Sta Cruz		231,456.00	100-06-01-014	
	Admin.-Main Market		578,640.00	100-06-01-015	
	Admin.-Slaughterhouse		347,184.00	100-06-01-016	
	CMO-Coliseum		578,640.00	100-06-01-018	
			12,151,440.00		
2 Janitorial Services	CGSO	Janitors/Aviary Maintenance	1,839,552.00	100-06-01-010	January 1, 2006 to December 31,2006
	CGSO (Aviary)		1,500,000.00	100-06-01-011	
	CMO		501,696.00	100-06-01-013	
	CMO-Coliseum		250,848.00	100-06-01-017	
			4,092,096.00		

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities are as follows:

BAC Activities	*Schedule*
1 Issuance of Bid Documents	December 13-25, 2005
2 Pre-bid Conference will be conducted at City Budget Office, City Hall, Zamboanga City	December 17, 2005
3 Opening of Bids	December 30, 2005
4 Bid Evaluation	December 30, 2005
5 Post-Qualification	December 30, 2005
6 Notice of Award	December 31, 2005

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P2,500.00 on item no.1 and P1,300.00 on item no. 2 to the City Treasurer.

The City Government of Zamboanga assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by
(Sgd.) VIRGINIA SAN AGUSTIN GARA
BAC Chairman

(PDI – December 12 & 17, 2005)

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) is inviting interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for:

PROJECT	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT
Supply, Delivery, Installation and Commissioning of Nineteen (19) units brand new 50TR Capacity Water-Cooled Screw Type Packaged Air-Conditioners with Semi-Hermitic Compressor using either Refrigerant 22, 407, and 134a Gas including its auxiliaries and the Rehabilitation/Improvement of Supply and Return Duct System of the DBP Head Office Building	**P41,000,000.00**
* Bids received in excess of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.	

Contract Completion: 180 calendar days from date of award of contract
Schedule of Activities:

Particulars	Date	Venue
Submission of Letter of Intent (LOI) and Application for Eligibility	January 3, 2006 (Tuesday) up to 4:30 p.m.	BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Submission of Eligibility Requirement Documents	"On or before" 9:00 a.m. of January 11, 2006 (Wednesday)	BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Eligibility Requirement Documents (Bidders are encouraged to witness the opening)	January 11, 2006 (Wednesday) at 9:30 p.m.	OPS Conference Room, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Issuance of Bid Data Sheet/Scope of Work	January 12-13, 2006	BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Pre-Bidding Conference	January 16, 2006 (Monday) at 9:00 a.m.	PSM, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Submission of Technical and Financial Proposals of Eligible Bidders	"On or before" 9:00 a.m. of January 31, 2006 (Tuesday)	BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Technical and Financial Proposals of Eligible Bidders (Bidders are encouraged to witness the opening)	January 31, 2006 (Tuesday) at 9:30 a.m.	OPS Conference Room 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City

DBP calls for the submission of Letter of Intent (LOI) from potential Bidders to apply for eligibility for the above project. Prospective Bidders should possess a valid PCAB license applicable to the above type and cost of the contract, have supplied and installed screw-type packaged airconditioners within the last three (3) years with a value at least fifty percent (50%) of the Approved Budget for the Contract and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Requirements Documents. Interested bidders must submit their LOI on or before **January 3, 2006 (Tuesday) at the BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City** and secure the eligibility requirements.

Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis and only those Bidders who passed the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Documents. The last day for the submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents: **"On or before" 9:00 a.m. of January 11, 2006 (Wednesday) at the BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City.**

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines.

The contract will only be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification. Interested parties may secure the Eligibility Requirement Forms from the BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City or you may download these forms at www.devbankphil.com.ph and at the Electronic Procurement Service of the Department of Budget and Management. A non-refundable fee of Php20,000.00 will be charged to all eligible bidders.

The Bank reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further inquiries, please call telephone numbers 8125702 / 8189511 loc. 2610.

Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–Dec. 10 & 17, 2005)

Form Number: SF-GOOD-05
Republic of the Philippines
Province of Iloilo
Iloilo Provincial Government

Project Reference Number ________
Purchase of Heavy Equipment
Iloilo Provincial Government

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

BID NO. B-4260

The **ILOILO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT**, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	:	Purchase of Heavy Equipments
Location	:	Iloilo Provincial Government
Brief Description	:	Heavy Equipments 3 units Brand New Road Grader 2 units Brand New Pay Loader 1 unit Brand New Back Hoe Loader 10 units Brand New Dump Trucks

Approved Budget for the Contract : P96,275,110.00
Contract Duration :
Delivery Period : Six (6) months after the opening of the Province of Iloilo of a Letter of Credit with the Land Bank of the Philippines, Iloilo City Branch.

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years with and amount of at least 50% of the proposed project of bidding, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest-calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	December 23-27, 2005
2. Pre-bid Conference	January 3, 2006
3. Opening of Bids	January 17, 2006 @ 10:00 a.m.
4. Bid Evaluation	January 17-20, 2006
5. Post-qualification	January 20-25, 2006
6. Notice of Award	January 27, 2006

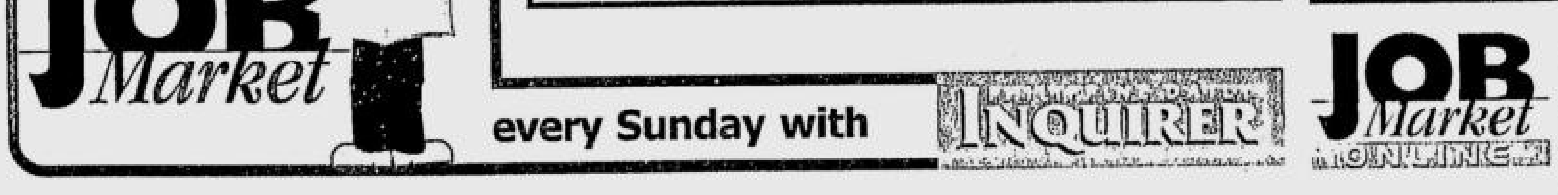
Bid Documents will be available only to the prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of One Thousand Pesos (PhP1,000.00) to the Cashier.

The **Iloilo Provincial Government** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidders.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **RAMIE S. SALCEDO**
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Dec. 10 & 17, 2005)



OBITUARIES

On this special day, December 17, 2005,
we fondly commemorate the memory of

DAVID P. LLORENTE

February 26, 1949 - October 9, 2004

A saved child of God through Jesus Christ,
a loving and dedicated family man, and a faithful friend.

We'd also like to express our appreciation for family and friends who've given their love, comfort and ongoing support so unselfishly in times of need.

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **HKT PHILIPPINES, INC. (HKTPI)** with plant site at the Carmelray Industrial Park II – Special Economic Zone (CIP II – SEZ) has filed with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) an application for **PIONEER STATUS** to be granted to its production of fuel cut valve, fuel pump, actuator, magnetic coil and magnetic valve based on newness of product, which if approved, will entitle the company to six (6) years of Income Tax Holiday. Said application has been officially accepted and is under process in this office.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file with the PEZA his/her objections in writing and under oath, within fifteen (15) days from the date of this publication.

Please direct your position papers/comments to the Enterprise Regulations Department of PEZA [Tel Nos. 551-9544; and telefax 551-3456].

(Sgd.) LILIA B. DE LIMA
Director General

(PDI–Dec. 17, 2005)

TRAINING INSTRUCTOR
(for bridge and engine simulator)

Male, not over 55 years old
Preferably posses training certificate in IMO Model Course 6.09 and 3.12 and training certificate in Training Program for Instructors conducting simulator based training;
Have 2 years sea experience as Master/Chief Officer or Chief Engineer/2nd Engineer;
Experience as instructor or assessor of Simulator will be preferred.

Please submit your resumé personally or by e-mail to:

SANDIGAN SHIP SERVICES, INC.
9th floor Salustiana D. Ty Tower
Paseo De Roxas cor. Perea St.
Legaspi Village, Makati City
Tel. Nos. 894-2821 to 24
Email: rommel.sandigan@dsp.net.ph

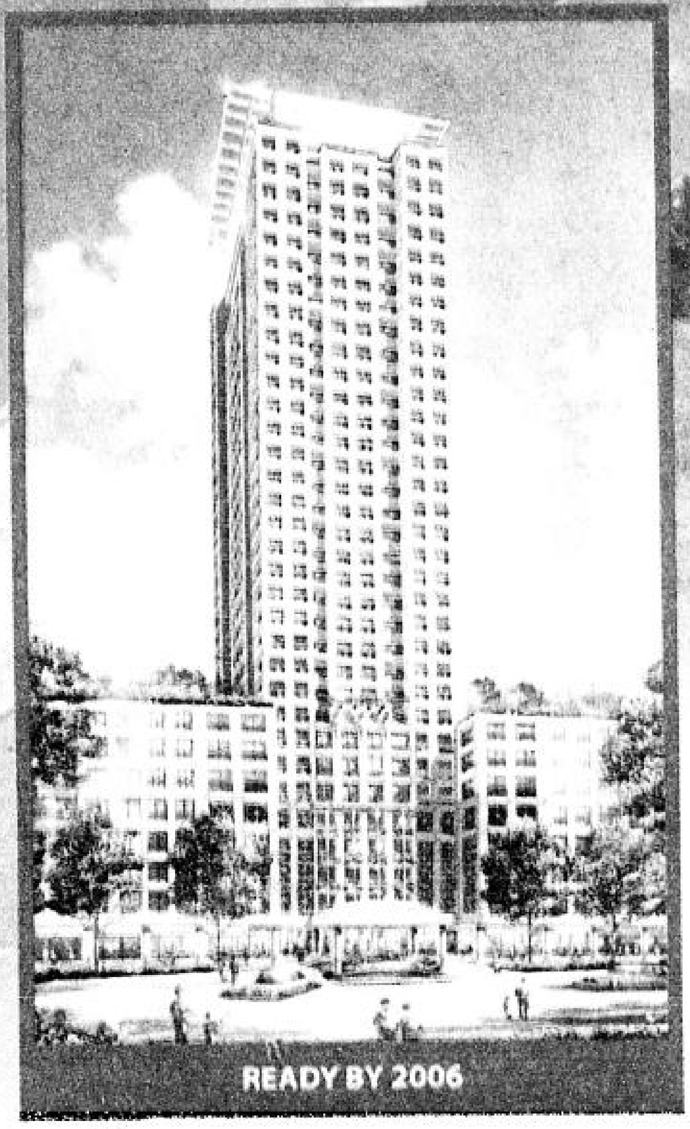
A Gift that Brings a Whole City at Your Door.

This Christmas, give your family the perfect gift: a home at **One Orchard Road, The Grand Eastwood Palazzo** or **One Central Park.** Give your loved ones the key not just to their dream home. But also to an exciting cosmopolitan lifestyle they can enjoy all year round. Make every day a holiday to celebrate… only at Eastwood City.

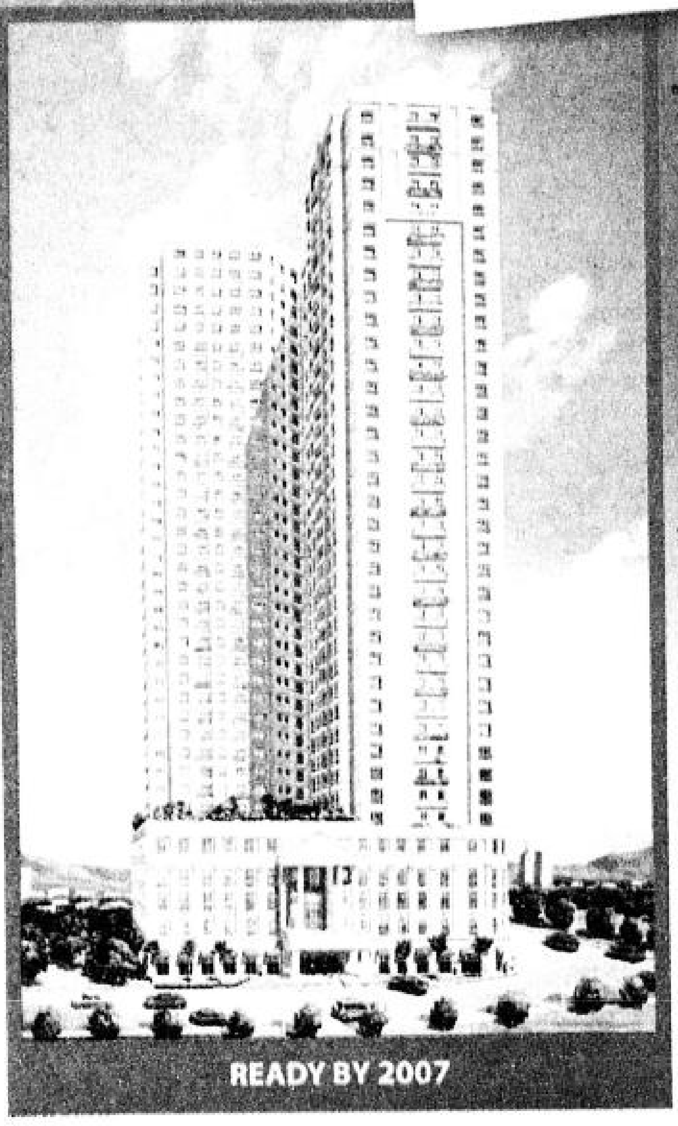
Dear Hon,
Remember the time I promised you the world? Well, I can't afford it yet in time for Christmas, but how does a City sound? Yes, a whole City! Because I am buying us a home at Eastwood City! It comes giftwrapped with a strip of chic cafés, shops, restaurants, cinemas, parks and a cluster of high-tech office towers, too. It will be a whole new lifestyle for us. Imagine how easy it will be to have all our needs just around us. And how amazing it will be to call an entire city our home. Just thinking about it makes me forget how far away I am right now.
But don't worry, I'll be home for Christmas.

P.S.
Tell the kids Daddy can't wait to see them.

With lots of love,
Dad



READY BY 2006



READY BY 2007

READY BY 2009

One Orchard Road

Contemporary homes ranging from cozy executive studios to lavish three-bedroom suites in three towers. With an array of deluxe amenities such as an indoor spa and sauna, tropical gardens at the 6th floor podium deck and a commercial arcade at the ground level.

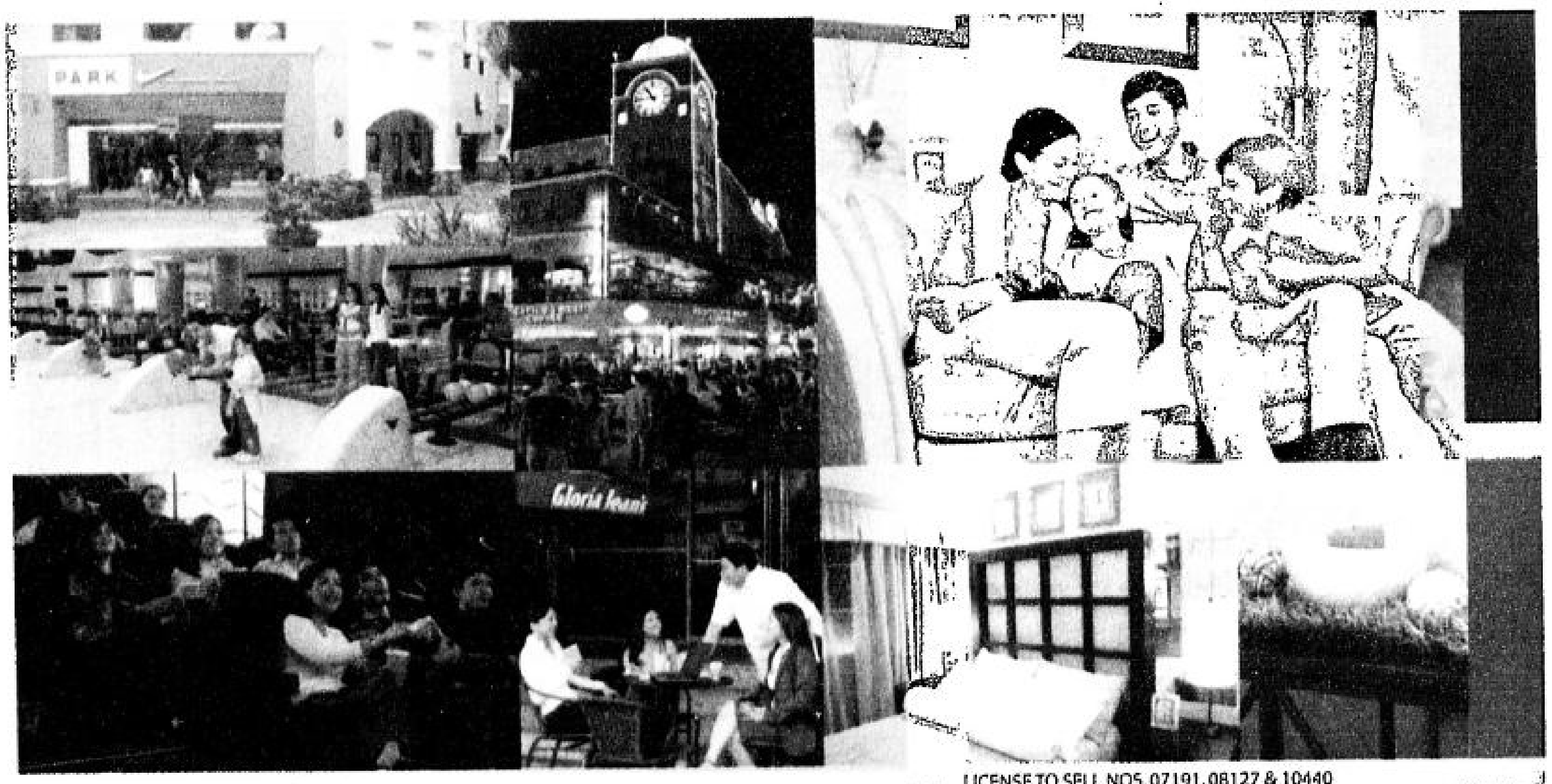
THE GRAND EASTWOOD PALAZZO

Enjoy royal privileges in a European-inspired executive studio or one- to four-bedroom residence. Sit back and unwind at the library/lounge area. Or luxuriate in a slew of resort-style leisure amenities at the 6th floor play deck: Roman-inspired pool, sunbathing lounges, poolside cabana, gazebo spa, children's play area and landscaped gardens.

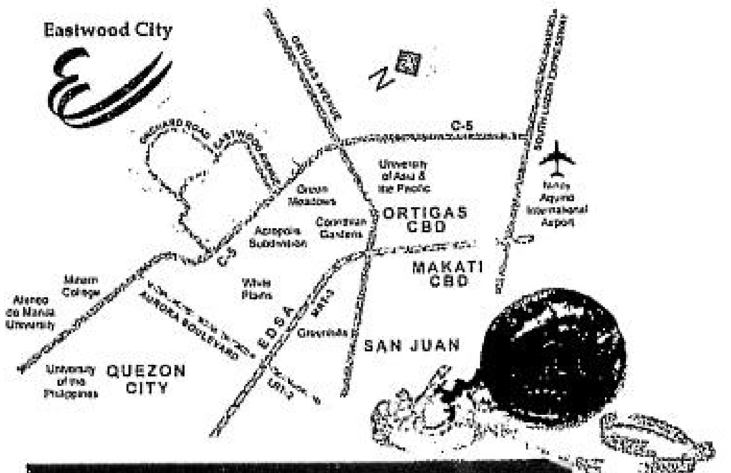
One Central Park

Luxury Residences at Eastwood City

Live atop a four-story mall with boutiques, restaurants, cinemas and gaming arcades in an executive studio or one- to three-bedroom suite. Just an elevator ride away from the 5th floor play deck and an outdoor landscaped park with a lagoon.



PARK
Gloria Jean's



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ORCHARD ROAD
EASTWOOD AVENUE
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Ninoy Aquino International Airport
Green Meadows
Corinthian Gardens
ORTIGAS CBD
Acropolis Subdivision
C-5
MAKATI CBD
Miriam College
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THE STREET of Dreams features the different home models at Canyon Ranch.

A Napa home for P300 a day

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE RACETRACKS can be seen at the infinity pool area of the five-bedroom house model.

THE INVITE TO THE PRESS for the luxury ride to Canyon Ranch in Carmona, Cavite, looked too good to be true. Organizers described the Century Communities Corp. (subsidiary of Century Properties Corp.) community as "picturesque," the stuff that could be seen only in brochures.

After all, it was just the first horizontal project of 19-year-old Century Properties Group, which was more known for its high-rise condominiums such as Essensa, Soho central, South of Market, West of Ayala, and Oxford Suites. Aside from satisfying media curiosity, this media trip was planned to be a rare romp

A NAPA/ B2-2

Living large in small spaces

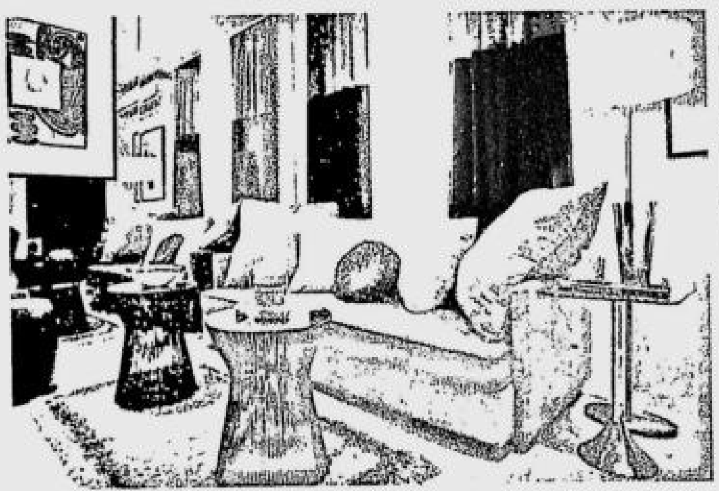
By Charles E. Buban

DON'T LET LACK of space hinder your creativity: Even a small home can be made big on design.

This seems to be what interior designer Chat Fores is conveying when Century Communities Corp. tapped her to design one unit of the Napa home collection—two (two-story, three-bedroom) units, each having only a combined floor area of just 50 square meters.

"It's a challenging proposition. As a designer you ponder

LIVING/ B2-2



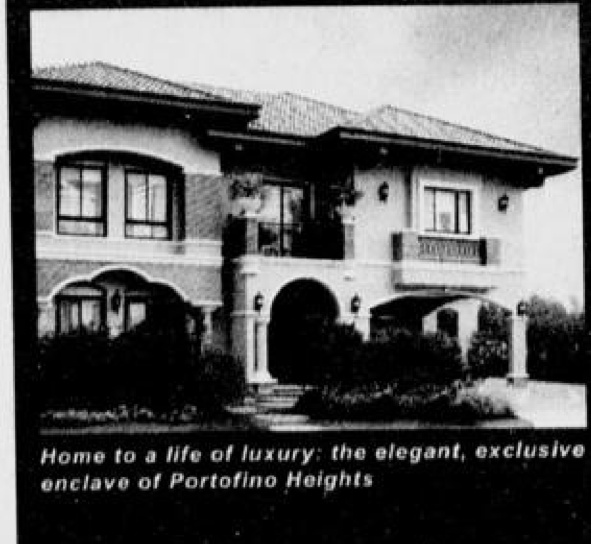
FORES employed larger windows as well as light color tones to allow more light to come in.

Portofino
THE NEW ALABANG

THE NEAREST, HOTTEST DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN METRO MANILA

RIGHT HERE.
RIGHT NOW.

The newest prime address in Metro Manila is right here and now at Portofino. An expansive, masterplanned, masterpiece property, Portofino puts together communities in enclaves, a commercial area, and amenities right beside the Alabang business and commercial district. You have a choice of custom home sites, courtyard homes and *WideLots*™. Portofino is a *Lifescape*™ taken to a grand scale at over 300 hectares within an even larger masterplan of over 1000 hectares. And you won't have to go far. You won't have to wait. A life of luxury in the magnificent Italian style is right here, right now in the development that's emerging as the new capital of the south, the New Alabang—Portofino.



Home to a life of luxury: the elegant, exclusive enclave of Portofino Heights

Gateway to the masterplanned Italian masterpiece development of Portofino

Portofino's Roman bath-inspired pool: one of the amenities enjoyed by residents today

Courtyards of Portofino: a growing neighborhood of quaint courtyard homes

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Green homes for the young and the old

GREEN ARCHITRENDS

Amado de Jesus

FOR FILIPINO FAMILIES, IT IS quite common to find several generations living comfortably under the same roof. It does not matter if the family lives in a luxurious house or a countryside nipa hut. One will find a young married couple with their children living side by side with their parents and of course their grandparents. Whether this arrangement is temporary or long-term, intentional or forced due to financial considerations, many families manage to cope with the situation.

What is admirable in many of these homes is the love and attention that each member of the family gives the elderly or disabled. Many experts say this care gives the elderly and the disabled a more meaningful life.

Unfortunately, many of our homes are not designed for the sensitive care of these special members of the family. Badly designed homes can add to the stressful situation of families.

In many developed countries, designers are now aware of their aging population and their design parameters take this reality into account. For example, there are now automated teller machines abroad that are built low enough for wheelchair-bound customers.

Efficient planning

Multiple-generation homes here and abroad require efficient planning and long-term use of all spaces. This feature is a basic element of green or sustainable building.

Why is a home adapted for the elderly and the disabled green?

A home that considers the special needs of the elderly and the disabled is green for several reasons. First, the home is designed for sustainability. This means it is well-suited for occupants of different generations. From young energetic children to less agile senior citizens, these homes are flexible enough to undergo minimal or no changes at all as occupants' needs vary.

Demolition

With proper planning and design, a green home can avoid or minimize expensive and wasteful demolition to accommodate the needs of the elderly and the disabled. This means savings in terms of building materials used such as steel bars, concrete blocks, timber, floor and finishing materials, electrical conduits, wirings, etc.

In contrast, with demolition works, new materials are bought from suppliers and virgin raw materials are used to manufacture more products. This cycle of demolition, purchasing and manufacture of new materials is repeated as more and more of the earth's resources are used up.

As demolition is done, construction debris and waste are generated. Disposing such discarded materials means expensive hauling costs. These debris and waste also mean added load to our dumpsites, a perennial problem in many towns and cities.

There is of course the additional hazard posed by construction dust and pollution, which will affect the indoor air quality and the health of the occupants, especially the elderly with respiratory problems.

A good example of effective planning and design is the conversion of an existing room such as the den or library on the ground floor into a bedroom for the elderly or the disabled. These rooms normally have access to an adjacent bathroom or if not, a new bathroom can easily be added. Furniture and accessories can simply be replaced or rearranged to transform these rooms into functional and comfortable bedrooms.

Barrier-free design

An important design consideration is the removal of obstacles or barriers that can impede the movement of the elderly and the disabled within the house. This would mean eliminating steps and thresholds.

Most house entrances have steps leading to it. The green alternative would be to provide a ramp or a sloped surface. The ramp must have a slope of 1:12. This means that for every one foot vertical rise, a 12 feet horizontal distance must be provided to allow easy access of a person in a wheel chair.

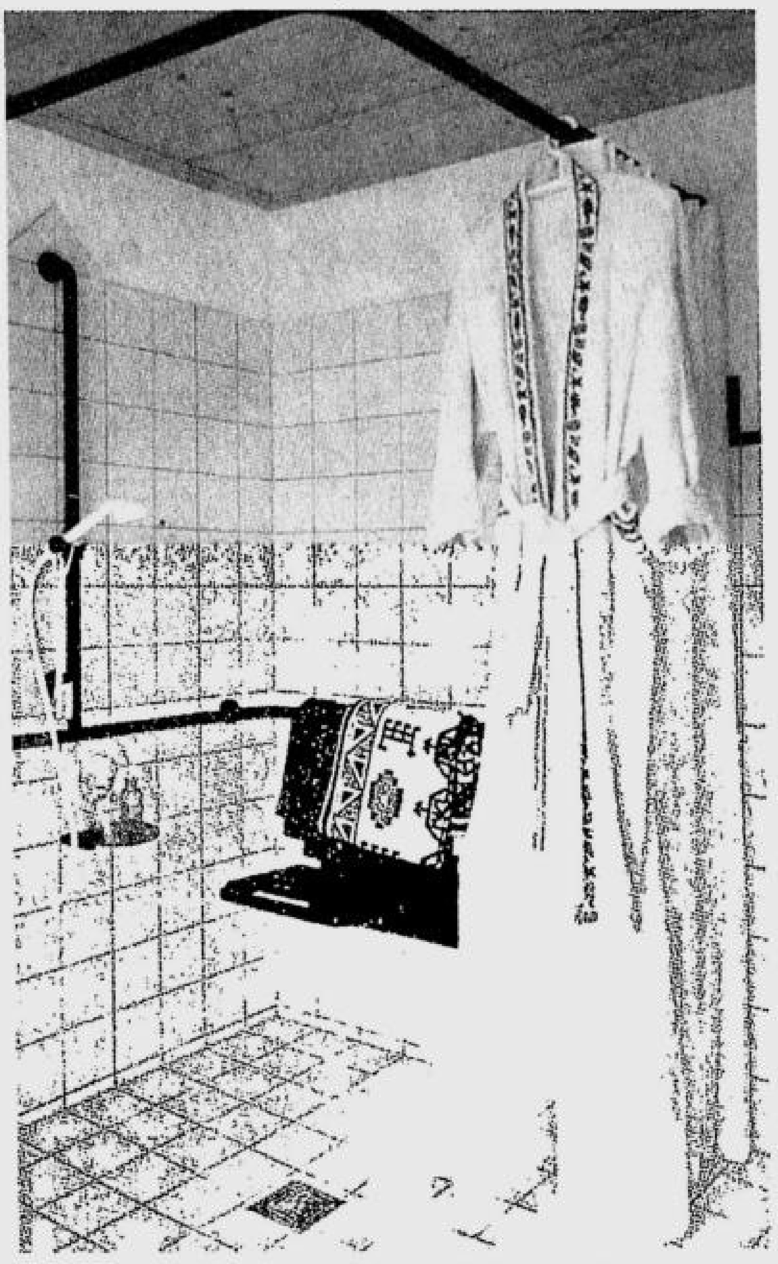
Doors and corridors also need to be designed well. Their width must be sufficient for easy access of wheel chairs. Their minimum width should be 36 inches. When these design features are incorporated at an early stage, future alteration costs can be reduced significantly.

Useful members of family

Not all the elderly and the disabled are helpless. Many of them are quite independent and proud to show it. This makes them feel useful and important members of the family and society.

To facilitate their movement within the home, it is therefore important that sufficient space be provided for them to maneuver, whether they use wheelchairs or crutches. They should have a clear area in each room for a circular space of about five feet to allow a person in a wheelchair to turn around.

About 36 inches of space should be provided in front of shelves and cupboards and at least 18 inches of space between the lavatory and the water closet.



SHOWER areas for the elderly and the disabled should not have thresholds or steps. A better solution is to gently slope the floor toward the drain. Grab bars and a bath seat can also be installed.

Aside from space to maneuver, special amenities should also be included. For example, when designing the kitchen sink, a kneespace under the sink should be provided to allow a person in a wheelchair to use it, instead of the usual cabinet. For the range, new models are now available that allow its installation without the oven compartment below. These models are ideal for providing kneespace under the range.

Shower compartments with elevated thresholds should be avoided. A better solution is to slope the floor toward the drain. A nonskid type of flooring for the toilet, especially for the shower is a basic necessity.

Light switches should also be installed at a height that is accessible from a sitting position.

A small and often neglected detail in the home that can be very inconvenient for the elderly and the disabled (especially for those with arthritis) are door knobs and lavatory faucet handles that are round and therefore difficult to grasp. It is preferable to use lever type handles, whenever possible for doors and faucets.

Facilitating movement

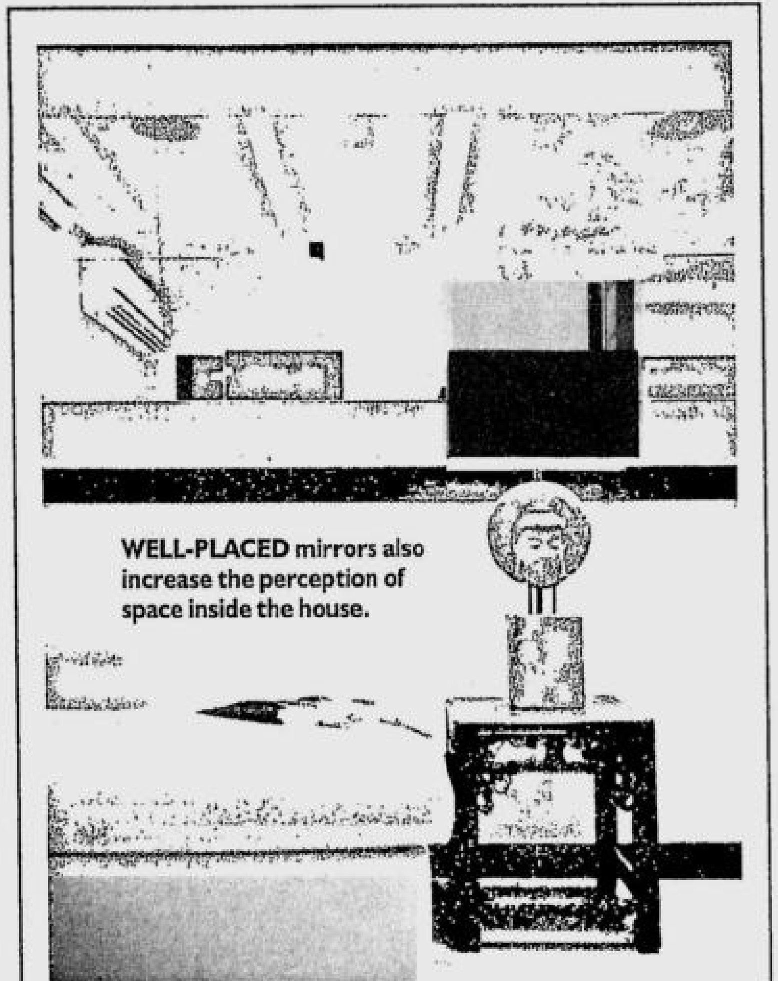
Safety features that can also facilitate movement in the home are various types of grab bars placed in showers and around the toilet fixtures.

For windows it is preferable to design them with low window sills. This will provide better views of the outdoor, bring in more daylight and be easier for a person in a wheelchair to open.

The accessibility law in the country was designed for the enhancement of the mobility of disabled persons for certain buildings and institutions. It does not cover private homes and residences. However, this should not stop designers from considering this important element in their projects.

Designing a home for several generations should not cost more than a conventional home. Green homes, whether built for the young or the elderly, use less energy and less of the earth's natural resources. This is what sustainability is all about.

The author is the chair of the board of judges of the Asean Energy Awards 2005 and is a practicing green architect. For comments or inquiries, e-mail amadodejesus@gmail.com.



WELL-PLACED mirrors also increase the perception of space inside the house.

Living large . . .

From page B2-1

the problem of how to organize and furnish an interior to meet all appropriate functional expectations, within small spatial parameters and still provide an esthetically pleasing environment," said Fores, who heads interior design firm, Chat Fores Design Studio.

Duplex-style homes

The Napa collection model unit, which Fores was assigned to is a duplex-style home intended for first-time home buyers or those wanting to own a more affordable package within Canyon Ranch, a premier residential development perched on the foothills of Carmona, Cavite and part of the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

Despite the limitations of size and small interior spaces, Fores was able to come up with a design employing creative space planning and tasteful, appropriately scaled furniture selection.

For one particular model unit, Fores' properly placed mirrors and glass partitions added to the feeling of openness.

Letting the light in

Color tones were light to emphasize the open feel of the space and help reflect light within the space. Use of transparent glass in some areas will also allow more light to penetrate the interior areas of the house.

Fores also opened each room to the morning and afternoon light, creating a more spacious feeling to the apartment.

Also, proper scale is the design philosophy used by Fores in dealing with such confined spaces—each room is filled not with bulky pieces but of furniture scaled for the room.

According to Fores, her design ideas are usually influenced by her frequent travels to interesting places and interaction with her students at the Assumption College and the Philippine School of Interior Design.

A Napa home for P300 a day

From page B2-1

for motoring media with the BMW 1 series, the designated "carriage" to bring us to the Ranch.

After a 25-minute drive from the Pacific Star Building in Makati to the entrance of the Canyon Ranch, we realized that all the hype about the Ranch was for real.

2 phases

Canyon Ranch, which occupies 17 of the 77-hectare San Lazaro Leisure Park, is split in two phases.

The rolling topography of phase 1 is dotted with classic California-style structures, the highest of which stands 20 meters above ground. Lots in phase 2 would stand more majestically at 25 meters.

How the developer situated each house (media was shown model units ranging from 50 to 280 sq m) in such a way that the four corners of each property would have an unblocked view of the hills, mountains and the skyline, is worth noting.

From each home and every window, the view is not monotonous, the inescapable downside of every "flatland" development.

The first phase covers 10 hectares, on which will be built 400 residential and commercial units. A commercial strip at the northernmost point of the property will be established. Out of the 30 commercial units to be built, 25 have already been sold.

The developer also used feng shui to determine where the development should face. In this case, Canyon Ranch faces east.

"Investors are buying in because they feel they have a target market dedicated to their businesses," said Marco Antonio, managing director of the Century Communities Corp.

Phase 2 will have 300 units.

View of the races

Canyon Ranch offers inexhaustible visual treats for its settlers: Mt. Makiling, the Antipolo stretch of the Sierra Madre Range, mysterious Mount Banahaw and the expansive Laguna de Bay. And perhaps a most unique and interesting viewing angle for almost all units at Canyon Ranch is that of the Manila Jockey Club's twin oval racetracks.

One five-bedroom house priced at P16 million and elevated 20 meters aboveground, for example, has a view of the racetrack from its infinity pool and even from the master's bedroom.

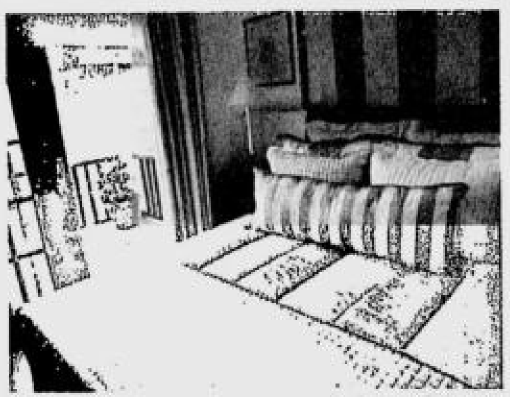
The community development was a joint venture project between Century Communities and the Manila Jockey Club.

Alfonso Reyno, chair of the San Lazaro Leisure Club, said that part of the vision was to create a leisure park special in the country. The horseracing facility, he said, is considered world-class and most modern in Asia.

Romantic and dramatic

The developer credits the romantic and dramatic physical characteristics of the property to the terrain and topography. The views

THE LIVING room of one of the model homes at Canyon Ranch.



A GOOD view of the racetracks is possible from the veranda of the master's bedroom.

from each window of each unit are unhindered yet varied, and houses do not obstruct the view for neighboring units.

The division from each house to the next would either be the elevation or the thoughtfully designed landscapes and rock formations.

For instance, the duplex-style Napa homes (which go for P1.8 million) would have the same unobstructed viewing privileges of the environment from all windows as that of houses ranging from P12 million to P million.

"We pride ourselves in offering 180 degrees of water and mountain as your horizon starting from Antipolo on the left, to Laguna de Bay, Mt. Banahaw and Mt. Makiling," said Marco Antonio.

First wi-fi community

"We're the first wi-fi (wireless fidelity) community in the country. Who says that you actually have to leave the house to work," he enthused.

The Canyon Ranch is surrounded with giant dishes allowing residents to network and surf the Internet from the comfort of their own backyard or pool.

Cool natural breezes course through a duplex-type Napa home, an ideal setup for residents wanting to do away with air conditioning.

"The whole value proposition of the south is that now it is a more viable place to live in. As (Metro Manila) grows more populated, and as land becomes scarcer, prices are rising. The price of a house in Carmona can be (equivalent) to a condo (in the city)," said Antonio.

Appreciating swiftly

Canyon Ranch boasts of its similarities in communities around the world where prices of residential properties situated near a racetrack have appreciated swiftly. One example is the posh properties near the Belmont Park Racetrack in New York.

The featured model units are Napa (50-sq-m duplex type with three bedrooms, two toilet and bath; Stanford (70 sq m, three bedrooms, two toilet and bath with porch); Irvine (80 sq m with three bedrooms, two T&B with porch); Delano (101 sq m with three bedrooms, three T&B with balcony). Berkeley measures 200 sq m with four bedrooms and three T&B; while Atheron has 280 sq m, four bedrooms and five T&B with balcony.

A Napa-type home can be had for a low down payment and at P300 per day, or roughly $5 a day.

For more information on its down payment schemes, you can surf www.canyonranch.com or call Century at 818-0925 or 893-7050.

"There are many plans for the leisure park and residents at Canyon Ranch will definitely benefit from this prime location and its future development," said chief executive marketing officer Emil Perez.

Century Properties Corp.—the parent company—was founded by Ambassador Jose EB Antonio one week before the Edsa Revolution in February 1986.

Courtyards enjoy a special status at Portofino

Responding to the need of more open living spaces in an overcrowded lifestyle, the heightened awareness of the environment and the desire to feel part of nature wherever possible, Brittany Corporation has developed the Courtyards of Portofino, drawing inspiration from Mediterranean homes.

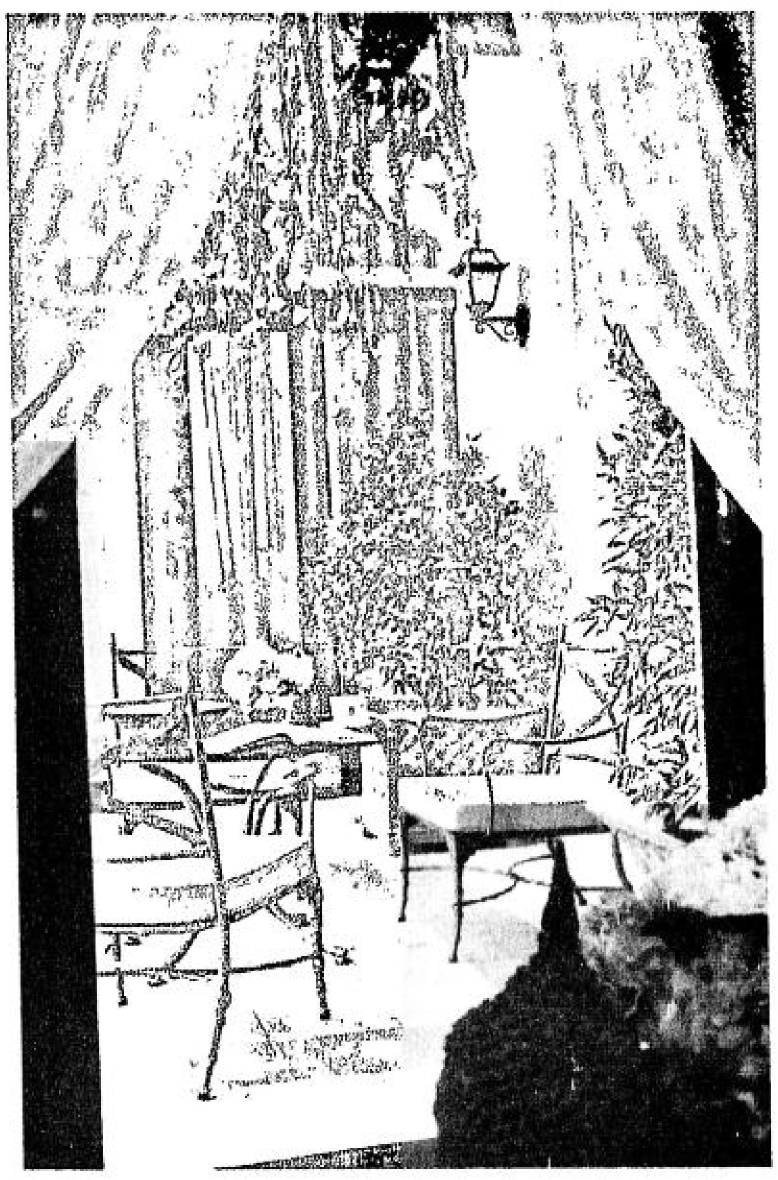
Rembrandt's Courtyard: "An inner courtyard makes entertaining a light, casual and intimate affair."

The over-all concept of this Italian-inspired architecture aims to emphasize the beauty of having an inner court inside the confines of a single lot. It defines courtyard as "an enclosed yard adjoining a building." It is similar to a patio or a lanai but it is thrust into a bigger opening or court to connect primary spaces such as the dining and living areas.

Courtyards of Portofino is composed of 96 lots with designs based on four model units, named after such masters as Rembrandt, Raphael, Monet and Cezanne.

Among all the model units, Raphael's courtyard is on the side unlike the Rembrandt model which is at the center of the home. In the Raphael, the courtyard as the main feature of the design recreates an atmosphere that is open and takes full advantage of natural light and ventilation. Also, intentionally unbounded on one side, the courtyard allows full access to and a splendid view of the garden. Thus, the concept of the side courtyard is realized.

The courtyard provides a wider expanse of outdoor light and views. Where sunshine is most welcome, rooms and spaces are naturally well lit at daytime. The courtyard catches the morning sun to brighten areas where the family can get-together. According to Brittany Corp's president Ms Jing Serrano, " The high end market composed of CEOs, professionals and balikbayans, have snapped up many of the houses and lots of Courtyards of Portofino. They have found the houses are well designed in traffic flow, provide right storage and make use of quality but low-maintenance materials."



Raphael's Courtyard: "A relaxing space for receiving guests or simply for soaking up the sunshine and fresh air."

The Courtyards of Portofino is along the Las Pinas-Muntinlupa-Laguna-Cavite link road. For property previews and inquiries, call 850 2868, 850 3084, or visit www.brittany.com.ph.

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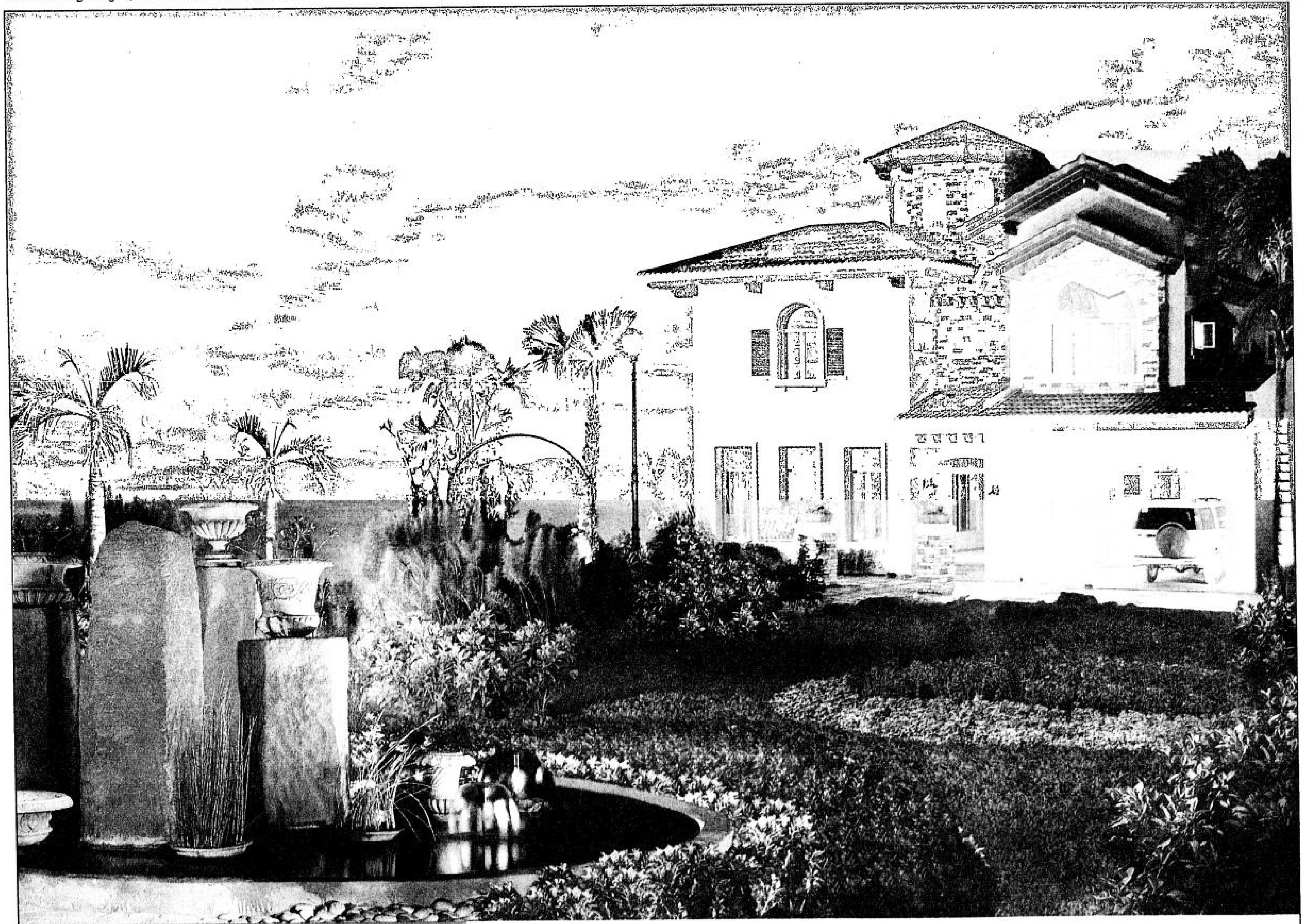


A 300-HECTARE LUSH
LANDSCAPE SERVES AS
THE CANVAS...

MASTERPLANNED HOMES AND
AMENITIES GIVE IT FORM...

NATURE PROVIDES A VARIETY
OF VIBRANT COLORS...

CHARMING ITALIAN VILLAGES
OFFER INSPIRATION...

THIS IS WHAT IT TAKES TO
MAKE A MASTERPIECE.

Portofino
ALABANG

A grand masterpiece of quaint magnificence, Portofino is an expansive masterplanned community of distinct Italian character. From its verdant landscapes to its exclusive enclaves–Portofino Heights, Portofino South, the *WideLots*™, and Courtyards of Portofino, every architectural design and detail of this vast property speaks of Old World elegance.

The Custom Home Sites, the Courtyard Homes and *WideLots*™, the 15-hectare commercial complex, the well-rounded amenities, and its closeness to commercial and business areas, schools, hospitals, and major roads, expresses the art of living the grand life in Portofino.

Own an Italian masterplanned masterpiece in Portofino.
Get a Property Preview. Call 850 2868 or 850 6986,
or click www.brittany.com.ph

Brittany
CORPORATION

Living large and loving it at Portofino

BRITTANY CORP. INVITES you to live your life to the fullest in a place that has the space, the grandeur and the elegance to let you do so. Indulge in spacious luxury that you can call home at WideLots of Portofino.

WideLots of Portofino is part of real estate maverick Brittany Corp.'s 300-hectare master-planned community, Portofino, the largest and grandest residential project in the Metro South. It evokes a warm and vibrant Italian idyll that harmonizes with its neighboring enclaves Portofino Heights, Courtyards of Portofino and Portofino South. Together, they inspire lush and blissful living that makes Portofino one of the most elegant residences around.

A five-minute drive from Alabang's business district and about 30 minutes away from Makati will take you to this splendid enclave. This development unique to Brittany Corp. is an exclusive property composed of prime lots for custom home sites that lie along the stretch of the Las Piñas-Cavite-Laguna-Muntinlupa Link Road.

Wider frontage

This new property is delightfully distinct because of the wider frontage that it offers. Each lot stretches horizontally, allowing homes to be viewed and better appreciated, creating a more striking appearance and offering lovelier "streetscapes."

"The WideLot concept magnifies the total grandeur of the house. For us, each house is a masterpiece and the wider frontage that the WideLots afford would ensure that it can be appreciated from every angle," said Brittany president Jing Serrano.

She also adds that this design concept is becoming more popular in other parts of the world. Through WideLots of Portofino, Brittany is bringing this graceful style of expansive living for more Filipinos to experience and appreciate.

HOUSES in the WideLots allow for greater window area that ensures entry of more natural light and better air circulation.

Apart from the homeowner's personal pride in showing off his home, the WideLots of Portofino boasts of several other advantages. A row of homes with wider frontage would certainly improve the streetscape and enhance the appearance of the community.

Because the frontage is wider than that of the conventional home, a WideLot house would have greater window area. This would ensure that more natural light could freely enter and allow the sun's healing radiance to illuminate the interiors. More and bigger windows would also ensure better air circulation within the house.

Greater visibility

Since WideLots homes are designed with a recessed garage, it naturally offers greater visibility from inside looking out. This design assures homeowners better security within the property.

And finally, because of the greater emphasis on the front of the house, a stronger bond with neighbors is formed. With activities being held in front rather than the backyard, there is more opportunity to wave hello to friends next door and across the street, fostering a greater sense of community.

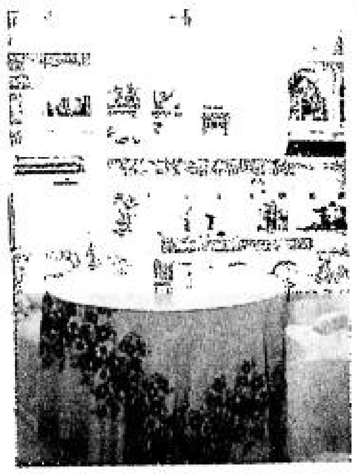
The WideLots of Portofino offers lot sizes ranging from 272 sq m to 594 sq m. Prices for lot packages range from P3.6 million to P6.9 million. The Portofino development, where the WideLots is located, is an Italian-inspired property that is distinctly characterized with paved cobblestones, sun-drenched colors, and magnificent architecture. The epitome of a good life, it combines the rustic charms of Southern Italy with all the conveniences that modern living affords.

For inquiries and property previews, please call 850-2868 or 850-3084 or visit www.brittany.com.ph.

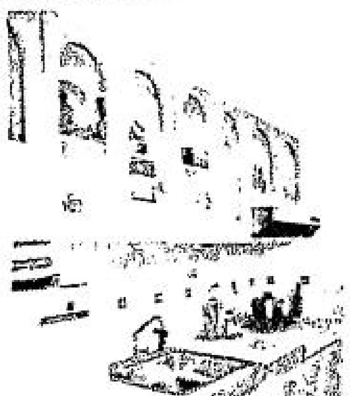
A kitchen makeover in time for X-mas feasts

A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING and everything in its place" is a famous kitchen adage that aptly describes the kitchen makeover granted by Summit Media's Real Living magazine's promo, co-sponsored by Handyman Do It Best Home Center. Handyman believes that one of the best Christmas gifts you can give yourself or your family is a home makeover, starting with the kitchen.

- **Halfway home.** "Just call me Lola Ana," said the charming old lady who showed off her favorite part of the house, the kitchen. When Lolo Jing and Lola Ana bought the property as a "halfway home," the place looked cramped and gloomy so they really didn't have initial plans of staying there. Besides, her job as rural development specialist has sent her traveling all over the world for the past 20 years. And if she's in the country for a much-needed respite, you can catch her playing with her grandchildren in their family house in Los Baños, Laguna, or volunteering in a prekinder learning center she and friends recently put up.
- **Letter and stamps.** Whether she's seeing the sights in Bhutan or working with the poor in South Africa, Lola Ana's secret can best be summed up in two words: "Sulat at selyo," (letters and stamps). "These kept my spirits alive all those years." The idea of writing for a makeover request was no surprise.
- **Write away!** "The kitchen then was small and cluttered. The wallpapers were quite old and each time I cook, the oil and smell leave a mark or stench in the carpet." Lola Ana narrated. Thanks to Real Living, Handyman and other partner establishments, her makeover wish was granted.
- **From dull to dazzling.** Since condo space was limited, Muffet Datiles and the Sensibly Chic Interiors team first sorted out the clutter and work toward a more functional kitchen. Handyman sponsored all paints and painting materials; cement grout tiles and tile adhesives; droplight chandelier and bulbs; wires and cables, utility rack, pullout dish rack, mug and utensils holder. Wallpapers were stripped off and walls were repainted to achieve a subtle Mediterranean finish. The carpet was replaced with attractive floor tiles while the sink was retiled and touched up with a unique center button tile which Lola Ana got from one of her trips abroad. The colored, painted bottles provided a whiff of homey air while the soft lighting made the whole area appear cleaner, more attractive and manageable.
- **Retirement haven.** Her next step? "I'm putting up a pocket garden by the veranda soon. For bird cages, mini fountains and my other needs, I will check out Handyman," she added.



HANDYMAN sponsored all paints and painting materials, chandelier and bulbs, wires and cables, utility rack, pullout dish rack, mug and utensils holder and repainted the walls to achieve a subtle Mediterranean finish.



NO more clutter, oil stains nor stench—just cleaner, more attractive and more manageable kitchen space.

Mediterranean paradise rises at Subic

A MEDITERRANEAN PARADISE HAS EMERGED at Subic Bay, right in the heart of this tourism hub.

It is a magnificent Mediterranean-style hotel with a large pea-shaped swimming pool nestled at the beach of Subic to showcase the glory of its sun, sea and sand.

Located along the Moonbay Marina Waterfront Road, this newly built Vista Marina Hotel & Resort appears like the crowning jewel of the bay, attracting local and foreign tourists to its enchanting ambiance.

First-class int'l hotel, resort

"Vista Marina is a first-class international hotel and resort complex with five-star amenities that enable guests to experience paradise whether by day or by night," said Vista Marina president Sang Woo Lee.

"Our 230-square-meter Ibizza swimming pool is the biggest along the Waterfront Road and complements the beach, where various water sports can be played, including volleyball," Lee pointed out.

Vista Marina's spacious lobby, which is designed as an atrium with a high round ceiling at the center, is enclosed by glass walls and doors.

By night, this hotel and resort complex is fully lighted, both inside and out as it sits on a 5,800-square-meter prime property, the largest at the beach front along Subic's entertainment strip, where practically everything a tourist needs can be found.

Elevated veranda

The elevated veranda in front of the hotel's Marista Bar & Restaurant serves as an alfresco buffet area for garden weddings, outdoor parties and other special occasions.

The guests can have sumptuous international cuisine at the restaurant, a private dinner in its VIP room, and a great time at the bar while enjoying the scenery at the same time.

Across the Marista Bar & Restaurant and the Ibizza pool is a gazebo, where bands play invigorating and romantic music on Saturday nights as guests dance in revelry.

For entrepreneurs and corporate executives, the hotel has a fully equipped business center at the ground floor, and a big conference room at the third floor for groups of up to 100 persons.

Elegant rooms

On both ends of the lobby are the hotel's east and west wings that house its elegant rooms. This three-floor hotel has 37 big rooms, the largest in Subic. Excluding the veranda, the deluxe room has a floor area of 32 sq m, the junior suite 40 sq m, and the executive suite 62 sq m. The deluxe room has either a queen-size or two single beds and a 21-inch TV, while the suite (junior and executive) has a living room with sala set and 29-inch TV, and a bedroom with single and queen-size beds, study table, and a 21-inch flat TV.

The hotel also provides 24-hour security, valet, housekeeping and room service. Parking space in the area can accommodate up to 50 cars. For inquiries or reservations, call (6347) 252-3373, fax (6347) 252-3374, or website www.vmhotel.com.

Vista Marina started operations last October and is scheduled for a formal opening in January next year.

Vista Marina
Hotel & Resort

VISTA Marina Hotel

Hotel chain serves diverse market

WITH OVER 500 ROOMS IN FIVE HOTEL properties, Legend Hotels International Corp. stands ready to serve an increasingly diverse market. From corporate clients to overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and *balikbayans*, the company has created hotels catering to the changing needs of different market segments for 14 years.

The 100 percent Filipino-owned and -managed hotel chain operates The Legend Villas in Mandaluyong City; Legend Hotel Palawan in Puerto Princesa; Mabuhay Manor in Pasay City, and Kabayan Hotel Pasay and Kabayan Hotel Cubao.

A tradition of innovation

The Legend Villas carries a tradition of innovation with first-class amenities and personalized service for the corporate market. Its international coffee shop and restaurant Lola Maria is a favorite dining spot for Filipino specialties. With the added convenience of Wi-Fi connectivity in the restaurant, patrons can enjoy great meals and still go online for the day's work.

A business hotel that feels like home, The Legend Villas is located on Pioneer Street in Mandaluyong near Edsa and offers standard and deluxe rooms as well as Family Rooms, Team Suites and Villa Suites.

Filipino architecture

Here lies a sprawling landmark of Filipino architecture that combines home-style cuisine, first-class amenities and Filipino service with a smile. This is The Legend Villas unveiled, a 125-room hotel where one can do business nearly anywhere in the property and still get much-needed rest and relaxation with family and friends.

The Legend Villas provides an inviting venue for those important meetings and memorable family moments. Conduct negotiations in fully equipped meeting rooms with secretarial services. From the privacy of your room, you can dial up to the Net or e-mail your proposals via Wi-Fi hotspots in the hotel's common areas. Function rooms provide teams with enough conducive environment to brainstorm campaigns overnight. There are Team Suites for guests who want to stay together.

Corporate world's haven

The Legend Villas has long been the corporate world's haven for those make-or-break business discussions. This is The Legend Villas' idea of a hotel that is also a virtual business center—business can be done anywhere and with pleasure.

With the hotel's distinctly Filipino brand of service from guest service officers and staff alike, corporate clients have kept coming back. They return because of efficient and amiable service, the latest in business technologies and amenities and that special touch in which the hotel knows you and what you need even before you say it.

Families also turn to The Legend Villas for their Sunday lunches, weekend dips in the swimming pool and outdoor jacuzzi with friends, or for planning debuts, wedding receptions or baptismal parties. The Legend Villas becomes a special place for building memories, whether it's reminiscing with relatives from out-of-town in the Villa Suites or staying up all night to chat with friends in the comfort of a Team Suite.

Also offered are 24/7 room service, valet parking, laundry and dry cleaning services, daily newspaper, foreign currency exchange, massage service and airport transfers. To get to know The Legend Villas, one must become its welcomed guest. So take time to turn that corner from Edsa and learn what makes this hotel legendary among business people and families alike.

Super SM Hypermarket to rise in Ortigas

SUPER SM HYPERMARKET RECENTLY HELD a groundbreaking and capsule-laying ceremony at its future site in Pasig, near Tiendesitas, Frontera Verde.

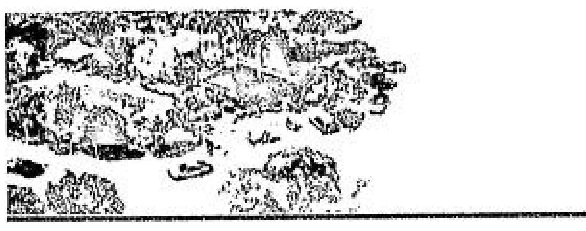
The stand-alone hypermarket, which combines supermarket, general merchandise and discount retailers, will have an area of approximately 55,000 square meters and will be operational in 2006.

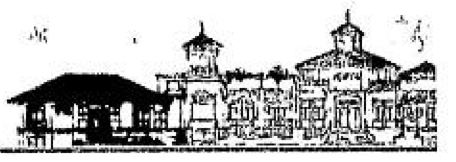
Super SM Hypermarket EVP Robert Kwee took part in the ceremonies together with Ortigas and Co.'s Rex Drilon and Cathy Casares Co and Greenhills Shopping Center's Joselito Santos.

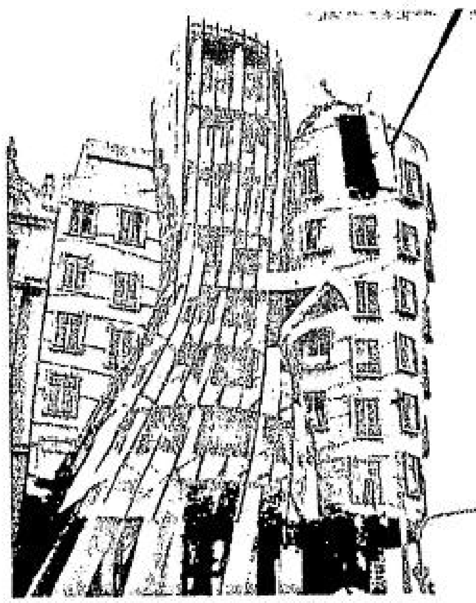
Also present were members of the design and construction team: architect John Raymund Pangilinan of its local architects, JR Pangilinan and Associates; Ibrahom Nuno, representing its contractor, Metro StoneRich Corp.; and Dennis Abcede Jr. of Abcede and Associates, its project managers. They were joined by SM's engineering team, Antolin Paule and architect Fides Garcia.

Super SM Hypermarket so far has outlets at SM City Sucat, SM City Bicutan, SM City Marilao, SM Supercenter Valenzuela and SM Supercenter Molino.

AT THE GROUNDBREAKING ceremony of Super SM Hypermarket are architects John Raymund Pangilinan of J.R. Pangilinan & Associate and Fides Garcia and engineer Antolin Paule of SM, Super SM Hypermarket's Robert Kwee, Ortigas & Co.'s Rex Drilon and Cathy Casares Co, Greenhills Shopping Center's Joselito Santos, Abcede & Associates' Dennis E. Abcede Jr. and Metro StoneRich Corp.'s Ibrahom Nuno.







A PORTION of "ginger's" dancing figure

The Dancing House

AMAZING STRUCTURES

IF YOU THINK PRAGUE, CZECH Republic, is all neo-baroque and neo-gothic, you may have to reconsider that thought. Right smack in downtown Prague is an office building which seems to be dancing—a strikingly modern contrast to the old and historic buildings around it.

Aptly named by the Czech as "Tancící dum" (the Dancing House), it is also fondly referred to as Fred and Ginger, after the legendary dance duo Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. The Dancing House was built in 1994 and finished in 1996, a joint project of Croatian-born Czech architect Vlado Milunic and American architect Frank Gehry of the Guggenheim Museum fame.

What viewers think

For some, however, the building only vaguely resembles a pair of dancers but looks more like a half-crushed can of Coke. Some might even think it looks like the building is sucking itself in or that it seems to be leaning onto the building beside it.

EACH panel has a unique form and shape

The site of the Dancing House was originally occupied by a house in the neo-renaissance style that was destroyed in a bombing in 1945. When the Dutch bank ING decided to put up a building on the same site and commissioned Milunic to work on the building, Milunic first asked French architect Jean Nouvel for a collaboration but the latter declined due to the small space of the site (500 square meters). The Czech architect then asked Gehry who accepted the challenge.

The Dancing House was constructed with 99 concrete panels, each with a different shape and dimension and requiring a unique wooden form. The office building also has a coffee shop at street level and a restaurant on the top floor. *Dianne Villafuerte*

Sisters find best site for business

STARTING A COMPANY IS NOT without frustrations but the story of sisters Cris and Carol Daez looks headed for success. Armed with family support, passion for travel and knowledge about the business terrain, the Daez sisters are confidently embarking on a new voyage: i-Discover! Tours & Adventures Co.

The siblings were exposed to business management very early on. The Daez family have been involved in various ventures including a record bar and a production studio that creates commercials and AVPs. Cris and Carol are the only girls in a brood of five—33-year-old Cris is the third child while Carol, 11 years younger, is the bunso.

Best location

Cris recounts how they happened to find the best location for the travel agency: "We were scouting for a good place—good, meaning one that will meet all the requirements that we had in mind: it has to be in a residential and commercial building at the heart of a really good business district—either in Makati or Ortigas. We were originally eyeing the posh places in the Legaspi area and Salcedo Village."

Despite their three-week scout for a place "by foot, under the heat of the sun," the search proved fruitless. That is, until a close friend suggested a residential/commercial condo being developed by Federal Land on Pasong Tamo in Makati.

Federal Land is the three-decade old property arm of Metrobank that set the trend of living in vertical apartments and condominiums in the Philippines. Oriental Garden Makati is one of its prime projects.

Cris remembers driving by Pasong Tamo and seeing the place, noting that it looks like a beautiful condo in a good location. The place also met all of the esthetic requirements she had in mind: a ground floor unit with floor-to-ceiling windows and a parking space for the clients. She finally decided to set up a meeting with the developer of Oriental Garden Makati.

Ready market

What sealed the deal for the two was the presence of three things that one won't normally find in one building: "What we first loved about the place is the location, plus the fact that it is a residential condo," which means they have a ready market, excellent for their business. They asked their parents' advice, showed them the place and the Daez elders liked it.

"I really appreciate that the Federal Land people make themselves available to us when we need to contact them, even on Saturdays and Sundays," Cris says.

The girls narrated a dismaying experience in a different condominium, which happened when they had just moved in: Cris was given the right key to enter the unit but were handed the wrong key for their bedroom. When they discovered the mistake, it was evening, the end of a backbreaking work week, and no condo personnel could provide them the right key.

They ended up sleeping on the floor of their unit, outside their locked room sans bed, pillows, blanket and aircon. They were given the correct key only the following Monday, leaving the two feeling so upset about the incident.

"We're certain it won't happen with Federal Land," says Cris. Carol adds, "And that condo doesn't even have parking for our visitors!"

All about service

The family traveled a lot, which made the siblings naturally fond of taking trips. In fact, Carol's wish before graduation was to have her own travel agency. But it wasn't until the two experienced a particularly frustrating trip in an Asian city that finally pushed them to follow their heart: the ladies were billeted in a dingy hotel located in a crowded, *palengke*-type locale and were not advised of tour kinks by their agent so they came home vowing to do the travel agency work themselves.

Unlike other travel agencies that typically get the job done in three to four days, the girls' turnaround time is so quick that close relations used to come running to them for help in solving travel troubles, "All for free!" Cris enthuses, "So we decided to turn it into a business."

Carol is currently i-Discover! tour director and enjoys "family tours" best where she gets to scout places that can be offered to tourists as possible destination. According to her *ate*, the newly graduated management major is the company "handywoman," a quick-thinking/fast-acting troubleshooter.

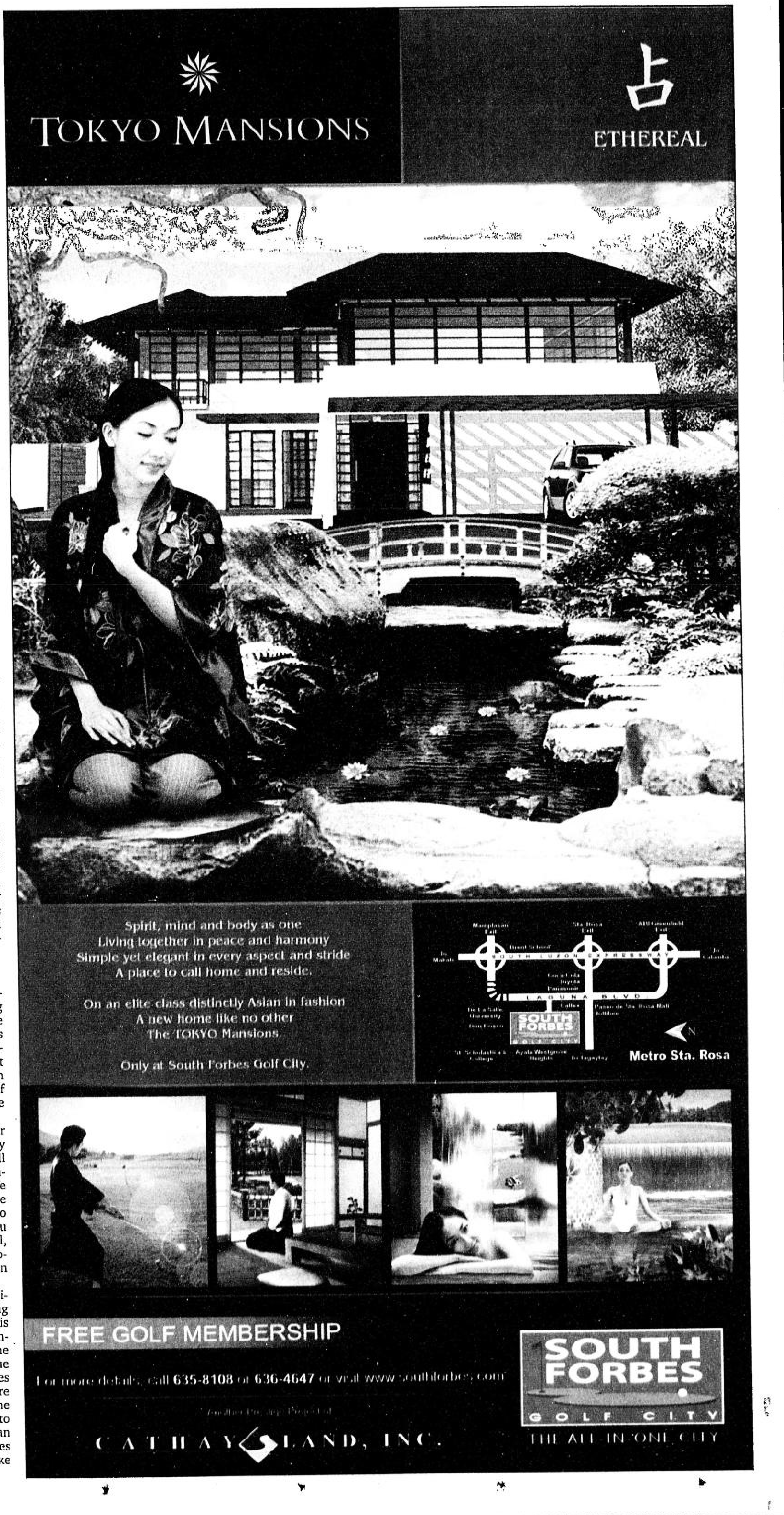
No place like home

It is Cris who takes on the bigger responsibility of managing the travel agency. Despite the heavy workload, she still finds time to teach high school math although she admits, "It's difficult right now because of the birth pains." The two are thinking of adding more personnel to handle the operations.

There's no place like home for Cris who has gone to many places around the world and still considers the Philippines her favorite travel destination. "We have pristine waters, we have nice people here. And you get to travel by sea, land and air—you experience everything!" Carol, on the other hand, is a young romantic who loved her stay in Spain.

For someone who has experienced the downside of looking quite young to be a manager, Cris knows not to judge by first impressions and instead takes the time out to discover the true worth of things: "Not all places that look posh on the outside are great inside," learns Cris. "The place has to have good people to support you." Right now she can say that Federal Land provides impeccable service to clients like them.

DAEZ sisters, Cris and Carol



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South Forbes showcases 8 model homes

SOUTH FORBES GOLF CITY WOWS HOME buyers by showcasing not two or three, but eight model homes. With so many elegant choices that will surely suit their lifestyle, no wonder many have invested in this fully integrated golf resort city.

Investors who are looking for an ideal first home in Metro Sta. Rosa can view four model units at the charming South Forbes Mediterranean Villas and another four model units at the resort-inspired South Forbes Bali Mansions.

Top Interior designers Ivy and Cynthia Almario blended their creative talents into designing these model units.

THE LOVINA features Asian-modern, resort-inspired interiors.

SOUTH Forbes Mediterranean Villas features four homes inspired by the allure of the Spanish coast like Alicante.

Interiors of 2 villas

The interiors of two villas—Alicante and Castellon—were inspired by the Spanish-Mediterranean-themed homes they have become familiar with in California. Thus, gold drapes and furniture adorn the living and dining rooms.

The boy's room features a nautical theme as inspired by the Mediterranean Sea, whereas the girl's room blooms with lilac. The master's bedroom comes in pastel blue and white, or in gold to set a relaxing tone.

A lot package at South Forbes Mediterranean Villas comes to as low as P8,000 monthly.

Interiors of 3 model homes

The designing duo has already completed the interior design for three Asian-modern residences at South Forbes Bali Mansions.

- **Coralia.** The first is Asian-modern with Balinese touches. Intricate woodcarvings adorn the walls, and hand metal designs are prominently featured in the living room. Nature is imbued in the dining room, as large leaves in fish bowls make dinner a truly nourishing spiritual activity.

Two bedrooms upstairs are definite show stoppers. Fuchsia pink, dark brown and apple green may seem an unlikely combination, but the sisters did it perfectly in the girl's room. Meanwhile, the master's bedroom, in bright red, will surely ignite passion in the couple's daily life.

- **Lovina.** The second is Asian-modern but more contemporary. Modern white ceramics in the living room, plus Japanese paintings and lovely calla lilies all over the house make up the Lovina's contemporary interiors.

This time, Mother Nature is prominently displayed in the girl's room. An elaborate mural of bamboo stalks, butterflies and birds lends a cool atmosphere to this room. The master's bedroom is also dramatic with its rust and beige theme. The couple's main luxury is definitely the master's bath, with its spacious walk-in closet and his-and-hers sinks that make morning preparation a breeze.

- **Nusa Dua.** The biggest at Bali Mansions was recently finished by the Almario sisters. It has three bedrooms including a luxurious master's suite, spacious main and daily kitchens, and an informal breakfast area. Its East meets West theme combines the features of Coralia and Lovina.

The fourth mansion, Candidasa, is also now ready for the viewing pleasure of South Forbes clients.

At only P18,000 a month, Bali Mansions is surely an attractive investment that will appreciate over the years.

GREEN leaves and aromatic candles lend the Bali Mansions a dining experience like no other.

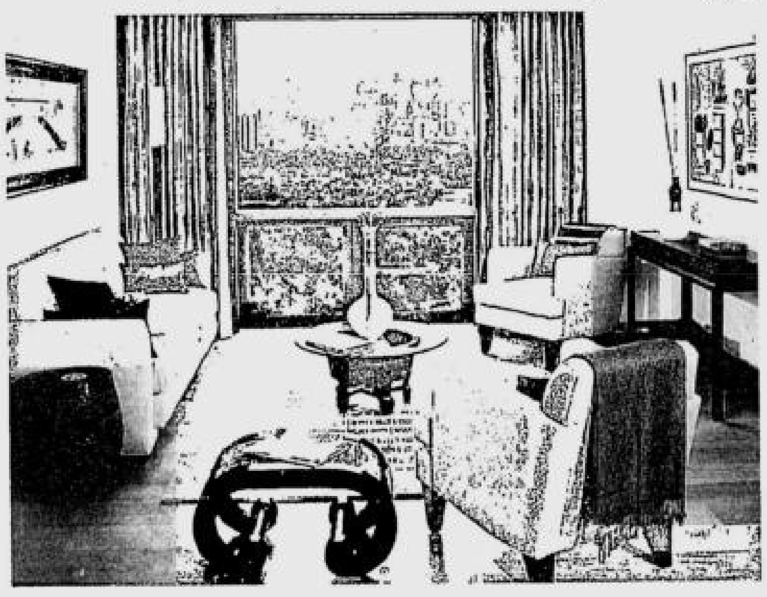
THE CORALIA'S exteriors preview the art works and resort-inspired theme of the interiors.

Free golf membership

The best pleasure on offer at South Forbes, however, is the free golf membership to the world-class, 18-hole South Forbes Golf Club for every lot and condominium investment at South Forbes. Designed by Asia's leading golf course designer, the International Management Group (IMG), South Forbes is also the first to grant members preferred access to and discounted rates in 42 top golf courses worldwide through the exclusive golf club of IMG Sports Club.

As such, South Forbes member-residents can soon tee off at the Nirwana Bali Golf Club, the Laguna Phuket Golf Club in Thailand, and San Francisco's prestigious Presidio Golf Club, among others.

To view South Forbes' eight model homes and to learn more about South Forbes' free golf membership, call 635-8108 or 636-4647 or click www.southforbes.com.


AT BONIFACIO Ridge, the stereotype of cramped condo living is defied through light-colored walls, wide windows and perfectly scaled furniture just as an interior designer would do, such as this unit envisioned by renowned local designer Tina Periquet.

Designing your own space

CONDO LIVING CAN BE IMMENSELY enjoyable especially if you value expressing yourself through color and design. However you decide to decorate your new home, it will definitely be a breeze at Bonifacio Ridge, the two-tower condominium development in Bonifacio Global City marketed and managed by Ayala Land. This is because Bonifacio Ridge units provide just the right environment for getting in touch with yourself and creating your own world inside your own home.

Even with limited precious space in the metropolis, designing your own place is easy, and achieving maximum use of space is possible at Bonifacio Ridge. Don't feel boxed in but rather explore ways to use colors and shapes to make daily living enjoyable.

Classic tips

Here are some classic tips and rules of thumb on how to make the most out of a condo unit space, especially if you are settling in at Bonifacio Ridge.

- **Avoid dark, restricting colors especially on your unit walls and ceilings.** Instead, choose light or neutral tones such as white, beige or yellow. If you are more adventurous, explore the use of soothing light green or baby blue.
- **Carefully choose furniture in a scale and size that is appropriate to your unit or room.** If furnishings are too big or too small, it will distort the area and make it look either cramped or lacking in elements. Bonifacio Ridge units are semifurnished to suggest ideal floor layouts and complementary furniture design, and to give you more convenience and less hassle in moving in immediately.
- **Hang paintings or illustrations on walls to give visual interest on blank spaces.** Another option is to free up the windows of heavy curtains or drapes. At Bonifacio Ridge, this is best to enjoy views of the Makati skyline or adjacent golf courses.
- **Bring the outdoors in with indoor plants or flower arrangements that are sure to bring a breath of freshness.**

At Bonifacio Ridge, many interior designers who have worked with homeowners are able to work freely and transform units into homes that truly reflect their own personality because of the units' clean lines and well-designed spaces. With some guiding tips from the experts, you too can make your space truly your own.

Since offices and commercial centers in the Makati central business district are easily accessible, you will feel as if coming home to Bonifacio Ridge is a proposition worth looking forward to every day. And with various amenities such as a multipurpose hall and podium area, you will never feel constricted in this city abode as you are able to spend time outside your home with family and friends.

For inquiries about Bonifacio Ridge, call 728-7000, e-mail ayala-sales@ayalaland.com.ph or visit www.ayalaland.com.ph. Model units available for viewing on-site.

Caribbean-inspired 'lifescape' centerpiece

AMONG BUILDERS OF HIGH-END RESIDENTIAL communities, maverick real estate player Brittany Corp. stands out for offering "lifescapes," each of which is a total environment for the enjoyment of daily living that elevates the quality of life of residents to new levels of fulfillment.

A signature Brittany "lifescape" is created with a theme inspiration from among the world's most desirable destinations. This one harmonizes with the location and its natural features, combined with thoughtful master-planning that strikes up a synergy with the thematic influences, resulting in a one-of-a-kind enclave that captivates the hearts of the fortunate few who will reside in them.

One such "lifescape" is found in the Caribbean-inspired development called The Islands. This Brittany community is strategically sited, bound by Molino-Paliparan Highway and Governor's Drive in Cavite.

The Caribbean, of course, is the archipelago south of Florida cradled by warm seas kissed by sun and wind, shaped by European, African and native cultural influences, known for its embrace and celebration of life that often finds expression in exuberant colors and lively musical beats like the calypso.

Tropical haven

The Islands of Brittany, located on 150 sprawling hectares of prime land, is a tropical haven, epitomizing laid-back, unhurried luxury amid bright sunshine, fresh breezes, living greenery and wide-open spaces (with an uncommon space-to-development ratio of 55 : 45), a perfect setting for the elegant tropical residences nestled there.

The latest of these residences is the just-launched Dianella model. With interiors designed by the much-sought-after team of sisters Ivy and Cynthia Almario, Dianella is an impressive centerpiece, befitting a Caribbean-influenced "lifescape."

Boasting a spacious floor area of 240 sq m, Dianella is the third model residence at The Islands, after Aristhea (210-sq-m floor area) and Alpinia (170-sq-m floor area). Dianella's exteriors are a cheerful, warm, muted orange, highlighted by white shutters and a second-floor balcony on the left side outside the master's bedroom. The appearance is one that promises comfortable and delightful island living for its privileged residents.

Refreshing innovations

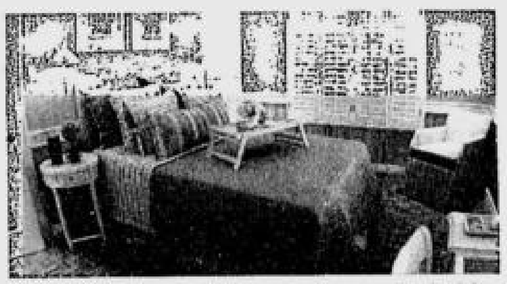
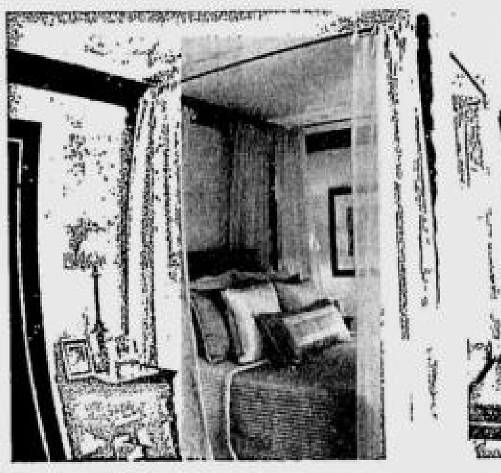
The promise seen in Dianella's exteriors is substantiated in the Almario-designed interiors, reflecting refreshing innovations in the sisters' approach. Cynthia Almario notes that Dianella's design is inspired by Florida's Palm Beach, more refined and sophisticated yet retaining the joyful spirit of its Caribbean origins.

The living room walls are rendered in an exquisite celery green, creating a happy, restful ambiance, with a high ceiling and indoor shutters on windows. Each bedroom has its own motif like the master's suite with its air reminiscentof a tropical vacation hideaway.

All the rooms feature handsome, white wooden shutters on their windows, an element of Caribbean architectural design dictated by the climate which is similar at The Islands. The shutters, on top of their esthetic value, double as window treatment, for easier maintenance since there are no fabrics to wash or dry-clean.

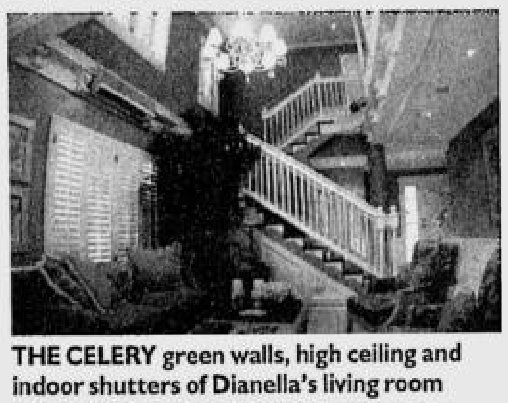
Also, the shutters have a function role, since these can be opened to let in air especially at night, in lieu of air-conditioning. The attention to detail is very evident in the interior accessories and fabrics which impart an authentic Palm Beach feel, including lamps, hat boxes and pieces of luggage with travel stamps.

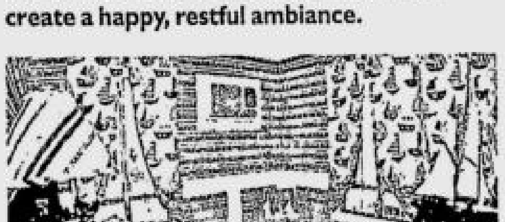
Dianella is the pièce de résistance that completes The Islands. Beyond being the showpiece that it is, this is a residence very much meant to be lived in. For previews of Dianella at The Islands, call 850-6986 and 850-2868 or visit www.brittany.com.ph.

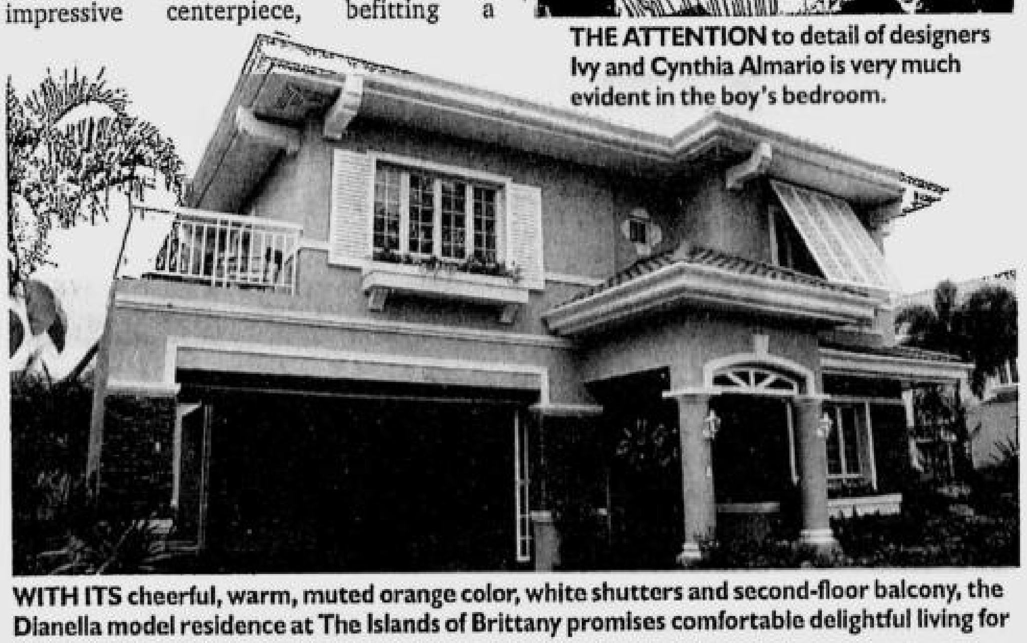



THE USE of white wooden shutters, seen here in the girl's bedroom window, is an element of Caribbean architectural design.

THE MASTER'S suite of the Dianella model residence has an air reminiscent of a tropical vacation hideaway.

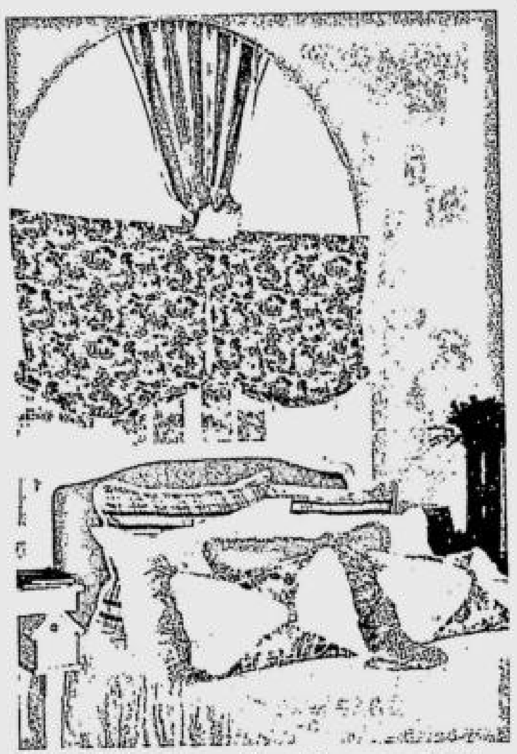

THE CELERY green walls, high ceiling and indoor shutters of Dianella's living room create a happy, restful ambiance.


THE ATTENTION to detail of designers Ivy and Cynthia Almario is very much evident in the boy's bedroom.


WITH ITS cheerful, warm, muted orange color, white shutters and second-floor balcony, the Dianella model residence at The Islands of Brittany promises comfortable delightful living for privileged residents.

Bringing Italy's splendor to Crown Asia's Valenza

THE VIBRANT hues used in the girl's bedroom create a cheery retreat.



EARTH tones like café au lait, ecru, auburn, and damask create a relaxing ambiance for the master's bedroom.

SUCCESSFULLY LEADING THE REAL estate industry for a decade, Crown Asia strengthens its title as "the home of choice" with the development of its exclusive neighborhood down south—Valenza in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Drawn from the Italian word which means "valence," Valenza embodies the chemistry of style and comfort united in symmetry. Located in the booming town of Laguna, the themed enclave will suit young couples building a secure future for their family and singles striving to be on top of their careers. With Crown Asia's careful planning and constant innovation in real estate development, Valenza is indeed a veritable investment for your hard-earned money.

Valenza presents model homes with its Roman inspiration evident inside and out. Rich Mediterranean hues traditionally seen in Italian houses are adapted by the homes at Valenza, while earth tones like café au lait, ecru, auburn and damask bring a warm and inviting atmosphere. Very Tuscan details include muted hazel walls and crimson roof tiles.

The interior's structural design features a domed ceiling for the master's bedroom and dining area, an elegant touch combined with functional esthetics. As a classic Italian element of design coupled with ingenuous architecture, domed ceilings allow improved air circulation while creating a sense of flowing space.

Model homes

Each of Valenza's model homes are carefully crafted to provide the feeling of residing in the countryside of Italy and living the Mediterranean lifestyle:

- **Dolce.** For the hardworking individual or a beginning family, the Dolce model's utility of space provides a floor area of 80 square meters on a minimum lot area of 110 sq m with three bedrooms, two toilets and baths, dining and living areas, kitchen, lanai and provision for a carport.
- **Amore.** Offering more room for the growing family, the Amore has a floor area of 97 sq m on a minimum lot area of 132 sq m. It features three bedrooms, a master's toilet and bath, two toilets and baths, dining and living areas, kitchen, balcony, lanai and provisions for a carport.
- **Felice.** The inclusion of family-centered areas in the Felice model is a pleasant addition for its floor area of 144 sq m on a minimum lot area of 132 sq m with three bedrooms, a master's toilet and bath, a balcony wrapped around the master's bedroom, two toilets and bath, family area, porch, lanai, family area and carport.
- **Veneto.** Boasting of more spacious and functional areas, the Veneto model caters to the needs and lifestyle of a large family with a floor area of 168 sq m on a minimum lot area of 132 sq m. It features three bedrooms, a master's toilet and bath with a walk-in closet, another toilet and bath, foyer, porch, deck, utility area, maid's room with toilet and bath, and carport.
- **Cipriani.** Reflecting the comfort and extravagance of the world-renowned luxury hotel in Venice, the Cipriani model has a floor area of 174 sq. m. on a minimum lot area of 150 sq. m. It features three bedrooms, a master's toilet and bath with walk-in closet, another toilet and bath, powder room, den, family area, balcony, porch, lanai, maid's room with toilet and bath, and a 2-car garage.
- **Bellini.** Named after the famous Italian composer, the Bellini is lavish option among Valenza's array of models. It has a floor area of 257 sq m on a minimum lot area of 210 sq m with three bedrooms each with its own toilet and bath, a walk-in closet for the master's, a den which can also serve as a guest room also has its own toilet and bath, family area, foyer, porch, deck, lanai, auxiliary kitchen, utility area, driver's quarters, maid's quarter with toilet and bath, and a 2-car garage.
- **Palladio.** The most luxurious choice of the seven model homes of Valenza, the Palladio model indeed draws inspiration from the balanced style in structural design of Italian architect, Andre Palladio. It has a 285-sq-m floor area on a minimum lot area of 210 sq m with three bedrooms each with its own toilet and bath, a walk-in closet for the master's, den with toilet and bath, an extra bedroom which can be converted to an office, family area, foyer, porch, deck, lanai, auxiliary kitchen, utility area, driver's quarters, maid's quarter with toilet and bath, and a 2-car garage.

ROMAN-INSPIRED design details lend a warm touch to the dining area.

Residents of Valenza need not leave the community for leisure or athletic activities. Amenities and facilities include a swimming pool, tennis and basketball courts, multipurpose clubhouse, children's playground, while parks and pocket gardens are spread around the neighborhood.

Resons to hurry home

Crown Asia gives you more reasons to hurry home with Laguna's verdant greens and tranquil environment. At Valenza, Sta. Rosa's fresh breeze can be enjoyed from your own balcony as the view of Mt. Makiling and Tagaytay Ridge greets you. The community is carefully landscaped to complete the comfortable ambiance resembling that of Italy's.

Discover a retreat from the metro's aggravations while finding a worthwhile investment for your family's future when you visit Valenza. Property previews may be arranged by contacting Crown Asia South at 873-1614 and 871-3882.

Paseo 3: Greenfield City's newest town center

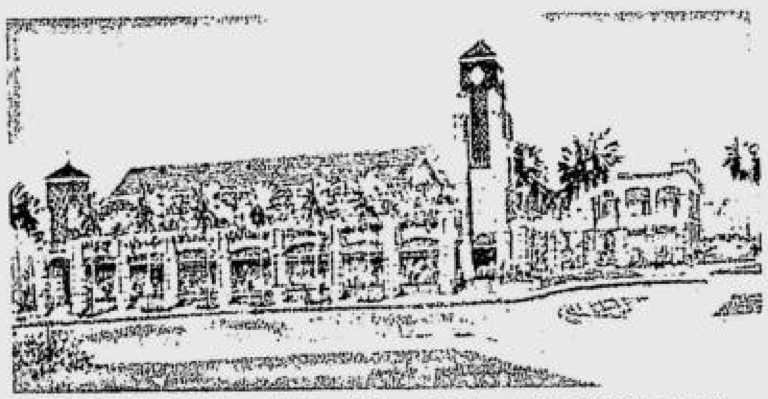
FOR MORE THAN THREE DECADES, PROperty developer Greenfield Development Corp. (GDC) has had various resounding successes in the real estate business. Among them are Greenfield City, Ayala Greenfield Estates, Southwoods Golf and County Club, Edsa Central, the Greenfield Auto Park and Paseo de Santa Rosa. These innovative endeavors continue to address the different needs of changing communities, and promise to exceed their market's expectations for many years to come.

GDC's masterplanned and carefully executed projects extend beyond Metro Manila as the said Greenfield City makes its presence felt in the Calabarzon (Cavite/Laguna/Batangas/Rizal/Quezon) area. The hub is fast becoming a crucial business zone, since many important investors have recognized it as one that sees tremendous development.

Commercial landmark

At its heart is its expanding commercial landmark, Paseo de Santa Rosa. The well-received Paseo 1 and Paseo 2 complexes have catered to diverse clientele with their different dining, shopping and entertainment choices for years now, which have led to the further expansion of the town center. Paseo 3 aims to satisfy a strong clamor for more commercial space in the area.

Says GDC vice president for suburban development Duane Santos: "Paseo de Santa Rosa is a town center; it's what we call a low-density commercial complex. It's known for three things: shopping and factory outlets, the center of night activity in the Laguna area, and the numerous dining options. We're extending the success of this concept to the Paseo 3 development. There'll be more dining and shopping outlets. And more nightlife and entertainment to address the growing market in the Santa Rosa area. It'll be open by March, in time for the summer months. There are an additional 50 establishments opening."



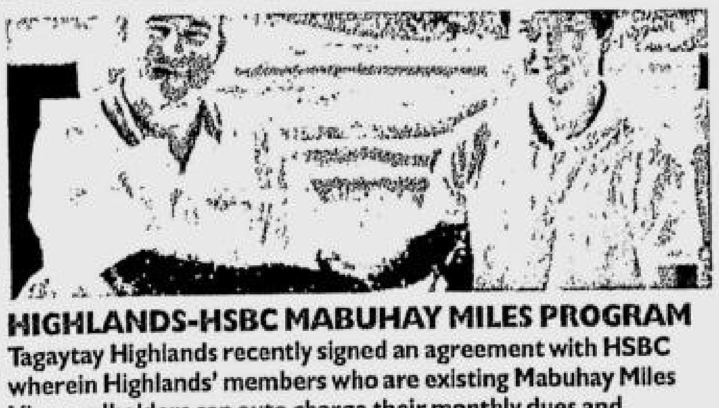
THE ARCHITECT'S rendition of Paseo 3, Greenfield City's newest town center.

Paseo 1 and 2 are frequented by nearby residents and denizens of Metro Manila alike, who find prized bargains in the commercial center, according to Santos. "Right now, we've established that Paseo de Sta. Rosa is ideal for designer/sports outlet centers like Nike, Speedo, Adidas, Dunlop; they're all doing extremely well. Ideally, most of these brands would like to dispose of their slower-moving goods. But they don't want these outlets competing with their regularly priced goods. So they want a place outside Metro Manila, but close enough for the customers go to," he says.

Town center expansion

Paseo 3 sees a continuation of more shopping conveniences, as more clothing and accessories shops are slated to open. "This is a convenient area. The new fashion apparel locators are coming over; they recognize the success of the existing outlets. We're expecting several designer outlets to open. We're also reorganizing the center; we're moving some of the restaurants behind because they have their established clientele already. The prime spaces, we're opening up for the designer outlets," Santos adds.

Paseo de Santa Rosa is situated at a prime location. Only a few remaining slots are available, and interested parties are encouraged to reserve immediately. For further information, please call 631-8651, e-mail marketing@greenfield.com.ph or log on to www.greenfield.com.ph.



HIGHLANDS-HSBC MABUHAY MILES PROGRAM

Tagaytay Highlands recently signed an agreement with HSBC wherein Highlands' members who are existing Mabuhay Miles Visa cardholders can auto charge their monthly dues and expenses for guaranteed free miles. Sealing the contract with a handshake are HSBC chief executive officer Warner Manning and Tagaytay Highlands vice chair Willy N. Ocier.

HCG Home and Away

HCG's Biggest Thank-You Gift Ever!

To thank its customers for their continuing patronage, HCG rewards them with its biggest promotion yet – HCG Home and Away! With over P1 million in prizes to be given away, HCG kicks off its traditional year-end promotion by giving away one trip for a party of four to Hong Kong Disneyland – 126 hectares of Disney-brand magic in Hong Kong! The trip includes airfare and accommodation expenses.

Hong Kong Disneyland

Other prizes include HCG gifts to be used around the home:

The HCG Gas Stove has a stainless steel body & top plate, with an enamel frame and copper brass burner – guaranteeing trouble-free and worry-free cooking. HCG Home and Away will raffle off 50 HCG Gas Stoves.

The HCG Massaging Bath Pillow is completely waterproof and fully submersible. Its low and high speed massage functions can relieve tense muscles, and its body can be mounted to any surface with suction cups. Two "A" batteries required, but not included. 300 HCG Massaging Bath Pillows will be awarded through HCG Home and Away.

The HCG Shower Heater is an easy-to-install, efficient, and safe water heater that's sure to add the right amount of comfort to your daily bath. For HCG Home and Away, 100 HCG Shower Heaters will be given away.

Not every HCG customer will get a chance to win these prizes – only those who purchase the selected participating packages may be so lucky. But take any one of the following packages home, and their benefits will give you the feeling that you've been rewarded enough:

THE PISSARRO PACKAGE boasts a trendy and youthful look, distinguished by generously curved fixtures.

THE U2 KING AND QUEEN PACKAGES showcase a superior design sensibility, with separate product lines expressing masculine and feminine forms.

THE ALMOND BLOSSOM PACKAGE incorporates delicate floral details into the porcelain, to evoke a youthful and fresh atmosphere in your bathroom.

THE LEGATO PACKAGE's classical lines evoke the elegance of times past.

THE MARK III PACKAGE unites form and function flawlessly, evoking the austere elegance and uncompromised comfort that befits a modern lifestyle.

THE ALPS PACKAGE showcases square corners that add a quality of strength and vitality to your bathroom.

THE BADEN SERIES' curves highlight the fluid motion of water, with a choice of lavatory and water closet to complement your décor.

THE ECO-STAR AND MANHATTAN PACKAGES – all under the Legend brand name – combine the elements of ceramic and wood to evoke class and elegance with every visit to the bathroom.

Other participating packages include **JUPITER, F8150, F8170, F8250,** and all Whirlpools. Buyers of HCG's bathroom series such as the **BADEN** one-piece and close-coupled water closet, the **LEGATO MII,** and **AROSA** are also eligible to join the raffle.

To be one of the lucky winners, an HCG customer must buy one of the participating packages or series listed in our print ads and posters to get an HCG Raffle Scratch Card. Scratching the card will reveal which of the minor prizes the customer has won. To qualify for the grand prize, the customer must fill up the scratch card and drop it in drop boxes at your nearest HCG distributor. Winners will be contacted by HCG so they can claim their prize!

Bring HCG into your home, and be part of HCG's history when you join HCG Home and Away! But your chance won't last long – we'll be accepting the last raffle entries on January 31, 2006, 7 pm. Join now!

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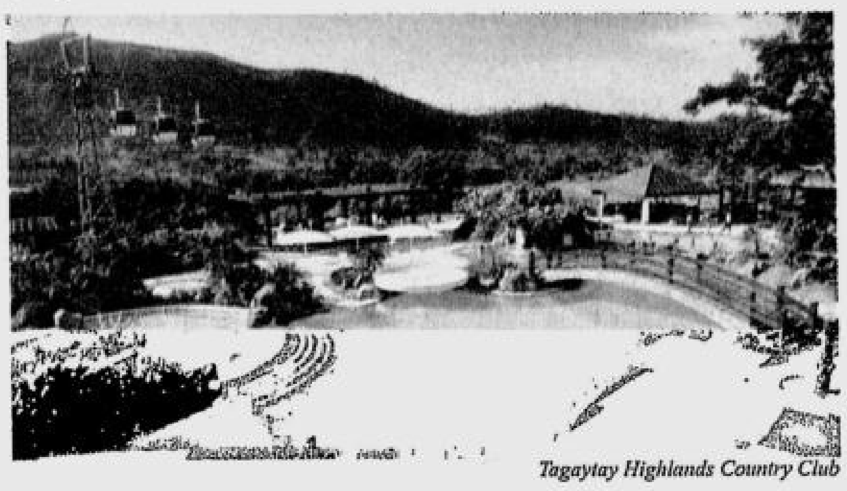
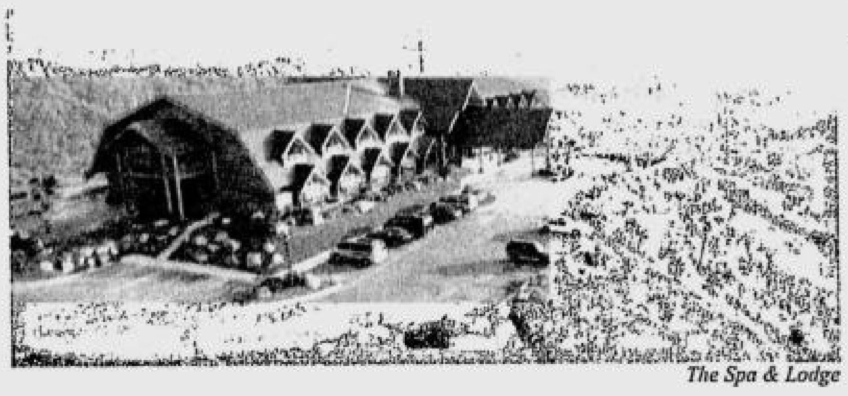


Tagaytay Highlands Country Club

NEUTRALIZE the harmful effects of stress – that's what we all need today. With the advent of the changing times, urban life in Metro Manila has become very stressful. As it has been scientifically proven that stress is destructive to the human being physically, emotionally, mentally, and even spiritually, a vital health solution is, indeed, what is called for.

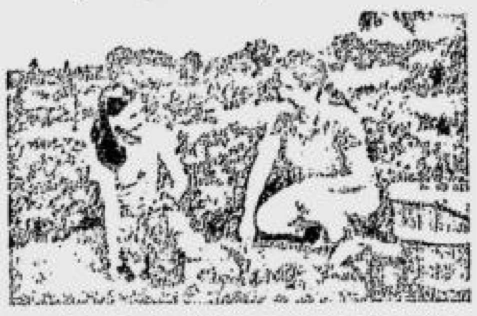
So, how does one manage to overcome all the pressures brought about by the rigors of work, school activity, personal affairs, and other exhausting problems? Eating healthy foods, doing regular physical exercise, and keeping up mental activities would help a lot. Likewise, it would be highly beneficial if one can find an ideal vacation destination where both adults and children can experience only fresh air, clean surroundings, wholesome food, and healthful amenities. Certainly, these are the right ingredients necessary to enable people to overcome anxiety and to nurture their holistic state of being to new heights of health.

At Tagaytay Highlands, the air is fresh, fragrant, and calming. It is the perfect retreat for the young, the upwardly mobile, as well as the elderly. Ideally located at the zenith of Tagaytay City, it boasts of a climate that is cool all year round and untouched by the ill effects of pollution. The entire stretch abounds with trees and lush greenery. There are no toxic wastes and pollution generated from motor vehicles or factories anywnere within or near the area, making it a suitable place for the health-conscious, and for adults and children, especially those suffering from heart and skin disorders, and respiratory problems like asthma.



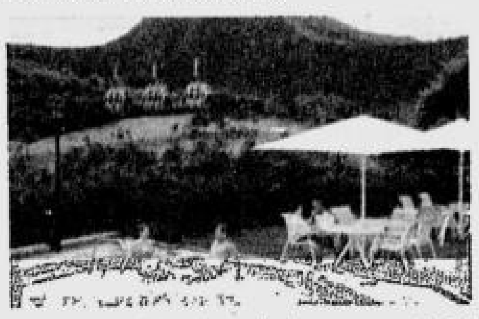
The Spa & Lodge

Aside from the health-friendly surroundings, the Highlands is a horticulturist's haven where green-thumbed patrons may engage in gardening, popular as a great stress-reducing leisure pursuit. Likewise, one can indulge in energy-pumping and tension-releasing activities such as various outdoor sports and wellness-promoting endeavors by going to the Spa or simply visiting the Greenhouse where organic herbs and vegetables are grown hydroponically. The adventurous may also seek out the Animal Farm, a delightful petting zoo and home to miniature animals from all over the world and dozens of bird species, or take delight in dropping by the Flowerside farm, an organic vegetable and flower garden with horse paddocks.



For the health conscious, there is a choice of sumptuous restaurants that serve delectable treats from regular fare to low-calorie and low-fat carte du jour. At Highlands, the food is all properly prepared and expertly handled. The Great Room serves healthy refreshments amid a very comfortable ambience; the Greenhouse Bistro offers organic salads, pasta, and fresh fruit juices; the Sports Center Veranda always has healthy fare for the fitness buffs. All these and more are readily offered, much to the delight of those who dine with gusto but would like to watch out for those additional inches and pounds.

There are also sports centers containing a complete range of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities where guests can indulge in physical activities like aerobics, brisk walking, swimming, treadmill exercises, and other sports of their choice. Then, there's The Spa & Lodge that provides refreshing facial treatments, massage and body treatment packages, Eastern healing arts, a salon, and other Spa packages. It is the excellent relaxation getaway for rejuvenating one's mind, body and spirit.



More than just being a wonderful vacation hub for families who will surely be enthralled by its stylish amenities, the Highlands has gradually evolved into a "retirement sanctuary" where residents can relax and retire in a healthy environment, whether that be just for a weekend, or for the rest of his/her life.

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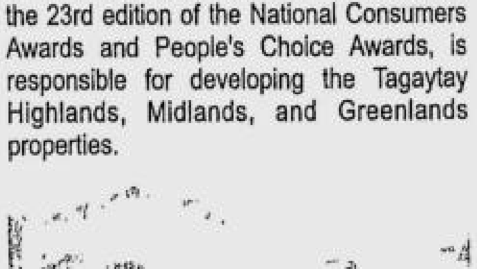
Belle Corporation, winner of the "Best in Leisure Property Development" award during the 23rd edition of the National Consumers Awards and People's Choice Awards, is responsible for developing the Tagaytay Highlands, Midlands, and Greenlands properties.



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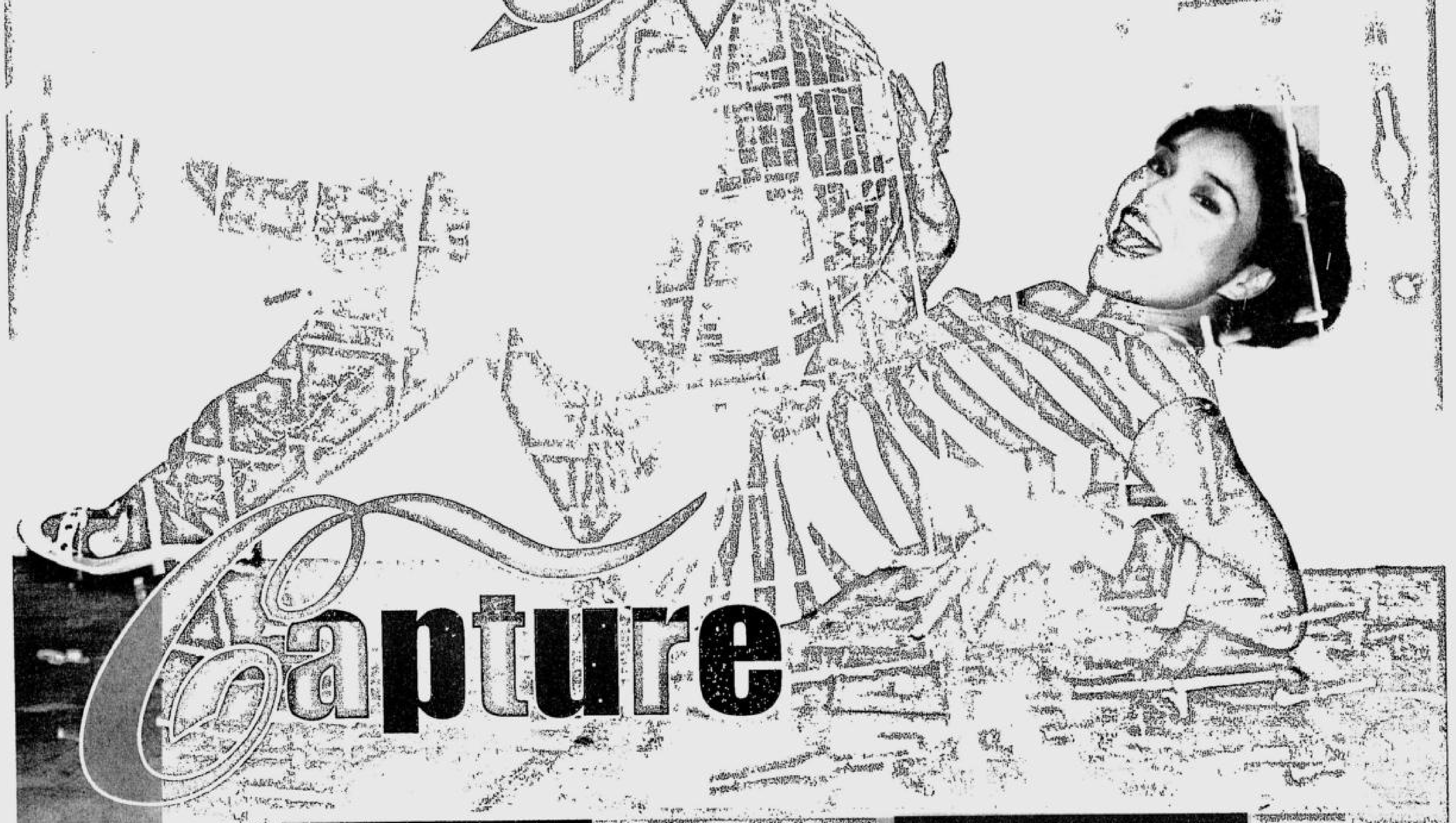

Capture

Julia Clarete Hollywood bound page C4

Miguel Rosales has a small package page E1

Team Super! loves Team Manila page D1

Artwork by Marcushiro, songs from Outer Hope page D4

Photography DR. MARLON PECJO
Styling POL TAPIA
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DECEMBER 2, FRIDAY
Italian Caprice
UST Wind Orchestra
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

Passage, Streetscape, 9:30pm

DECEMBER 3, SATURDAY
Voices from the 5th
Trumpets Musicademy
The 5th, 3:00pm

Masks and Music
Manila Chamber Singers
Level 4, Art Plaza, 4:00pm

Christmas with You
La Salle Pops Orchestra
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

First Circle, Streetscape, 9:30pm

DECEMBER 4, SUNDAY
Voices from the 5th
Trumpets Musicademy
The 5th, 3:00pm

Noel at the Shang
Featuring Noel Cabangon
Grand Atrium, 4:00pm

DECEMBER 9, FRIDAY
In Christmas CompanY
The CompanY
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

8 Track, Streetscape, 9:30pm

DECEMBER 10, SATURDAY
Italian Serenade
Montserrat Male Choir
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

U Turn, Streetscape, 9:30pm

DECEMBER 11, SUNDAY
Voices from the 5th
Trumpets Musicademy
Grand Atrium, 4:00pm

DECEMBER 16, FRIDAY
Serenata
Meralco Chorale
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

Jay Cayuca with the Utopian Soundscape Orkestra
Streetscape, 9:30pm

DECEMBER 17, SATURDAY
Angelic
The Philippine Children's Choir from Mandaluyong
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

DJ Boyet Almazan, Streetscape, 9:30pm

DECEMBER 18, SUNDAY
'Tis the Season to Dance
Effie Nañas Dancenter
Grand Atrium, 6:00pm

DECEMBER 19, MONDAY
In Laude
UP Singing Ambassadors
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

DECEMBER 20, TUESDAY
Voci Giovani Cantano
Ateneo High School Glee Club
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

DECEMBER 21, WEDNESDAY
Un Bel Natale
University of the East Chorale
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

DECEMBER 22, THURSDAY
Christmas with Jay C
Featuring Jay Cayuca
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

DECEMBER 23, FRIDAY
Tales of Christmas
Alitaptap Storytellers' Club
Art Plaza, 4:00pm

The San Miguel Christmas Music Festival
San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra
Grand Atrium, 7;00pm

The Authority, Streetscape, 9:30pm

DECEMBER 24, SATURDAY
Il Prete Rosso
Kithara Quartet
Grand Atrium, 5:00pm

DECEMBER 26, MONDAY
Gloria in Excelsis Deo!
Novo Concertante
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

DECEMBER 27, TUESDAY
Flute and Guitar, plus Soprano
Sonny Yangco, Lester Demetillo and Alexis Edralin
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

DECEMBER 28, WEDNESDAY
Canticorum Jubilo
Chorus Paulinus
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

DECEMBER 29, THURSDAY
Vivaldi and More!
Global Brass Quintet
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

DECEMBER 30, FRIDAY
La Dolce Vita
Ateneo Chamber Singers
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

Toy Symphony with Ella Mae Salson
Streetscape, 9:30pm

DECEMBER 31, SATURDAY
Going Baroque
Philmusica Woodwind Quintet
Grand Atrium, 5:00pm

JANUARY 6, FRIDAY
Serenata
Meralco Chorale
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

Silk, Streetscape, 9:30pm

JANUARY 7, SATURDAY
Guitar Frolic
Kasilag Guitar Quartet
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

RJ & Friends, Streetscape, 9:30pm

JANUARY 8, SUNDAY
Carnival of Venice
GC4 Brass Choir
Grand Atrium, 7:00pm

Shangri-La Plaza

Mark Nicdao

My favorite subject would have to be: Human beings in extraordinary situations

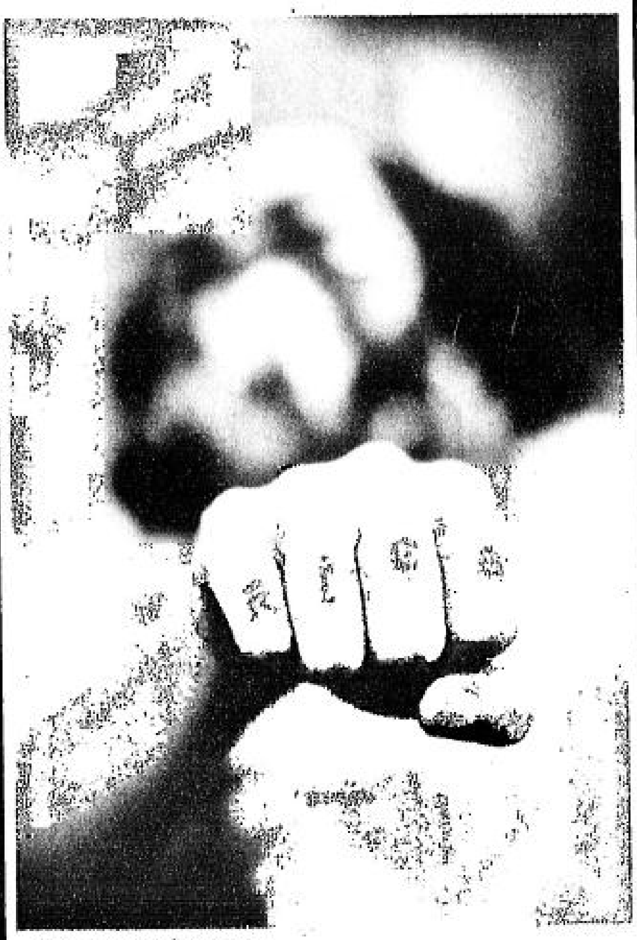
My fantasy shoot location is: Where the titanic is right now

I get inspiration from: Good and bad movies, music videos and art

What people don't know about me is that: I'm allergic to cats and I almost died because of it.

If I wasn't holding a camera I would be holding a: remote control and watching TV and movies all day

My life is a picture of: My hair. Sometimes it's messy, neat, oily, smooth, blonde, blue and red. It's unpredictable.



Steve Tirona

My favorite subject would have to be: real life

My fantasy shoot location is: outer space

I get inspiration from: within people don't know—there's a reason why they shouldn't know

If I wasn't holding a camera I would be holding: my pillow

My life is a picture of: eternal youth

Tom Epperson

My fantasy shoot location is: the moon Imagine shooting in zero gravity with the earth as your background.

I get inspiration from: DRUGS! (Just kidding). Movies, books, family, friends, dreams, MTV and life itself.

What people don't know about me is that: I play a mean blues harp.

If I wasn't holding a camera I would be holding my: surfboard

Superfriends!

Interviews by David Milan

PHOTOGRAPHERS' SPECIAL

Xander Angeles

My favorite subject would have to be: anything edgy and stylish

My fantasy shoot location is: Kazakhstan or Iraq and Smokey Mountain. *Sa* Mars *o maski sa* buwan

I get inspiration from: The dark side of the force.

What people don't know about me is that: I am a frustrated Sushi chef.

If I wasn't holding a camera I would be holding: Sharp knives, raw seafood and cold rice.

My life is a picture of: Perfection!! Well, almost perfect.

Victor Consunji

My favorite subject has to be: To be perfectly honest. I love shooting women. There is something especially sensual and attractive that only the face or personality of a woman can bring to a photograph.

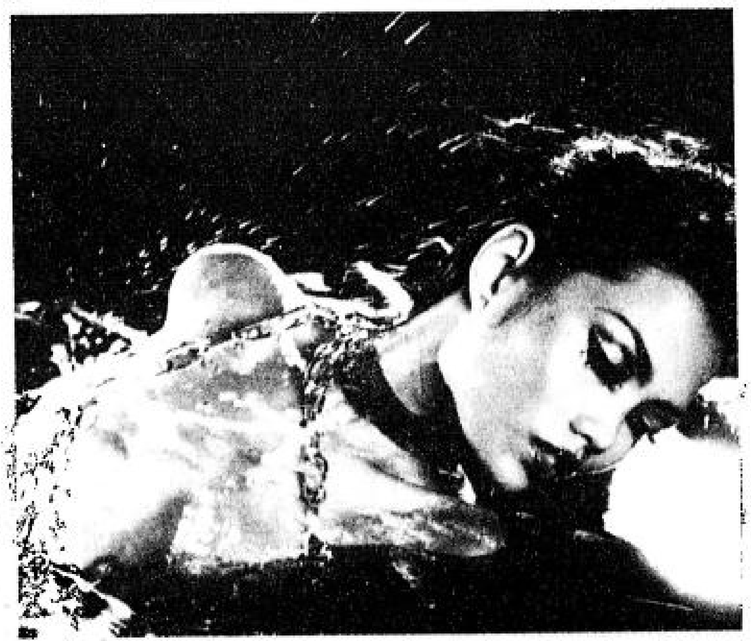
My fantasy shoot location is: Any place that is extreme. Antarctica, The Sahara, Underwater.

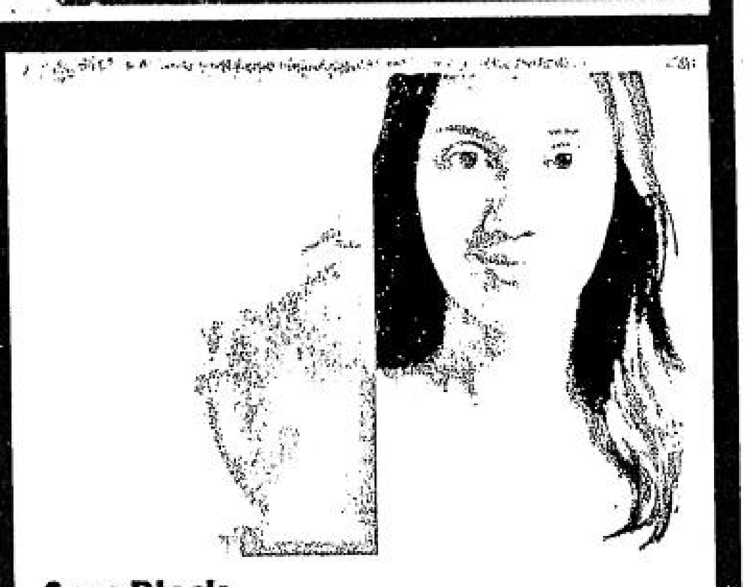
I get inspiration from: the people I see around me. The TV shows, pop culture, everyday events, coincidences, and most of all, I get inspiration from seeing people trying to do their very best. Not because they're being paid for it, not even because they've been ask to do it, but because they want to express themselves in what they do.

If I wasn't holding a camera I'd be holding a: shovel. Literally. When I'm not shooting, I manage my own construction company called VCONSUNJI, Inc. We build houses, townhouses, and condominiums. Those are my two passions in life. Photography and construction. Both are all about creativity. One in a visual sense, the other is about problem solving and solutions.

What people don't know about me: I had never used a professional camera in my life before taking my first published photo.

My life is a picture of: A traveller. Always wanting to try, travel, or see something new.





Sara Black

My favorite subject would have to be: People with character

My fantasy shoot location is: If Tim Burton's mind is tangible, I'd love to shoot there.

I get inspiration from: Cinema

What people don't know about me is that: I'm really shy.

If I wasn't holding a camera I would be holding a: Boarding pass

My life is a picture of: Pick-up sticks

Paolo Pineda

My favorite subject is: Interesting people... especially women ...and fine art travel field landscape photography

My fantasy shoot location is: Grand Canyons (It used to be the pyramids in Egypt but done that)

I get inspiration from: Movies, music videos, books, magazines, photographers and of course my environment

What people don't know about me is: That I'm a crazy insomniac.

If I wasn't holding a camera I would be: In New York studying film or directing TVC's and MTV's locally or somewhere abroad

My life is a picture of: A blurred black and white photo of a young kid who is lost in some way.

ME WANT BLOOD!

Jenna Genio

My favorite subject would have to be: Pretty boys in skinny pants

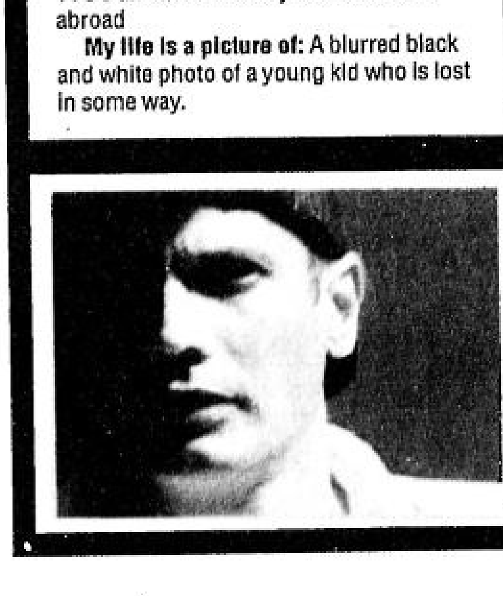
My fantasy shoot location is: A punk club in the 80s

I get inspiration from: People who are better than me.

What people don't know about me is that: I am actually a Mexican druglord, who goes by the name of Mario Juanito "Donkey Dick" Pepito.

If I wasn't holding a camera I would be holding a: Flaming cattle prod.

My life is a picture of: "The Scream" painting by Edvard Munch



Frank Hoefsmit

My favorite subjects are: People with substance, faces that tell a story. Flowers. The human body at its peak.

My fantasy shoot location is: A fashion story with Madonna and Paris Hilton in International Space Station, but if that's too costly, I'd settle for shooting Michael Jackson in the deeps of an abandoned coal mine.

I get inspiration from: Images just pop up in my mind, impressions triggered by nature, city life, movies, books... Waterfalls and fountains fuel my imagination and bring my **creativity to full gear.**

What people don't know about me is that: I abandoned home at 17, worked at night to pay for my med studies, and by doing so stumbled upon fashion photography. Photography ever since remained my love, one to fulfill my creative mind. My business senses made me start my first IT venture at 24, which, eventually brought me to the Philippines 7 years ago. Until today I remain a workaholic, combining business, photography and pleasure to celebrate life.

If I wasn't holding a camera I would be holding a: Scalpel

My life is a picture of: A moon flower on Mars...

Jake Versoza

My favorite subject would have to be: candids

My fantasy shoot location is: the moon!

I get inspiration from: conversations, music, sunrises

What people don't know about me is that: I'm colorblind

If I wasn't holding a camera I would be holding a: Rope in my neck

My life is a picture of: psychedelic memories and surreal moments

Hollywood Dreaming with Julia, not Roberts

THE NET. "I'm hardly a technophobe. Imagine, your life has just been deleted! I would have really gotten into Sandra Bullock's Angela Bennett."

LABYRINTH. "Playing Jennifer Connelly's Sarah would be a treat, to be lost in a labyrinth straight out of the imagination of M.C. Escher (and Jim Henson!)"

CAMILLE. "It is said that Camille is the ultimate test of the dramatic actress. Playing Marguerite Gautier requires a show of integrity, restraint and passion."

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER. "The energy of this film is incredible, it explains why it has become a classic."

From page C4

ed me, the more that I thought that what I was doing with my character is right."

After her stint in that soap opera, meatier roles in more Star Cinema movies followed including the Aga Muhlach and Joyce Jimenez comedy, "Narinig Mo Na Ba Ang Latest?" and the surprise youth-oriented box office hits, Trip and Jologs.

"I miss doing films like Trip and Jologs, they're so much fun to do. But I guess it's like a cycle, there will always be times when those kinds of films are in demand and times when they're not."

Julia's acting style is characterized by her dead-on interpretation of the characters that she plays. More often than not, it's her eyes that say a lot more than the dialogue she's supposed to memorize. In a horror acting segment of Hollywood Dream, Julia impressed judges Armida Siguion-Reyna and director Joel Lamangan with her largely silent interpretation of the sequence.

"Thank God, I got that right," she says recalling the sigh of relief that she heaved when she was commended for her reading. "It's a horror sequence so I thought I'd show how terrified I am not by screaming and saying a lot but by simply not saying anything at all and just relying on my facial expression to convey my fear."

In between her acting career, Julia still managed to find the time to take up courses in Advanced Management and Business Administration, studies in the field of business that would serve her well in case the whole show biz well dries up.

And it almost did. After being with ABS-CBN for the longest time in her career, she was released from her contract and for a while became a freelancer. That's when offers became few and far between and Julia found herself being an out-of-work celebrity.

"Those times were really hard and depressing," she remembers. "I was behind in my apartment's rentals and was about to be evicted. I just wanted a second chance."

That second chance came when a guest stint at Eat Bulaga eventually led to a regular hosting stint. Toni Gonzaga has just left the show and for a while, the show was trying out several guest hosts to fill her void.

"I was a guest contestant in their TKO portion and I was told backstage that if I do well, the show just might consider me as one of the hosts. I actually won that contest and now I'm here."

Although Julia had to endure unfair comparisons with her predecessor Toni Gonzaga, she proved that her effervescent presence was exactly what the show needed. It also didn't hurt that she's a very competent host who is more than capable of making people laugh. And she can sing and more than hold her own against the likes of Ciara Sotto and Gladys Guevarra in the much-awaited TKO portion of the show. In short, she was a perfect fit.

But you know what happens when it rains? Yes, it pours and Julia's blessings did not stop with her Eat Bulaga break. For the first time in her career, she is now an image endorser of Bonjour de Corp, a local casual wear line she now wears in the show and for most of her waking hours.

An outgoing girl, Julia prefers things that are out of the ordinary—extreme sports like ultimate freesbee, artwork by Francis Bacon and Gustav Klimt and, believe it or not, farming in New Zealand which is actually her "ultimate dream."

Her fondness for rock music is also something that she can now afford to indulge. Julia is currently fronting a band called Circus that covers classics by the Rolling Stones, The Doors and The Clash. They're now coming up with their own original material. She also has solo singing stints, working her butt off to save for a laptop that she's long been dreaming of having.

With her victory in Hollywood Dream, that laptop may not be the only wish that will be granted for Julia this year. With a much-coveted Screen Actors Guild card as one of her prizes, there will certainly be numerous opportunities for this very talented artist to well, eventually pass the audition.

BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA. "This gothic extravaganza is fertile ground for any actress. Winona Ryder's "Mina," falling under the terrible spell of an alluring vampire…"

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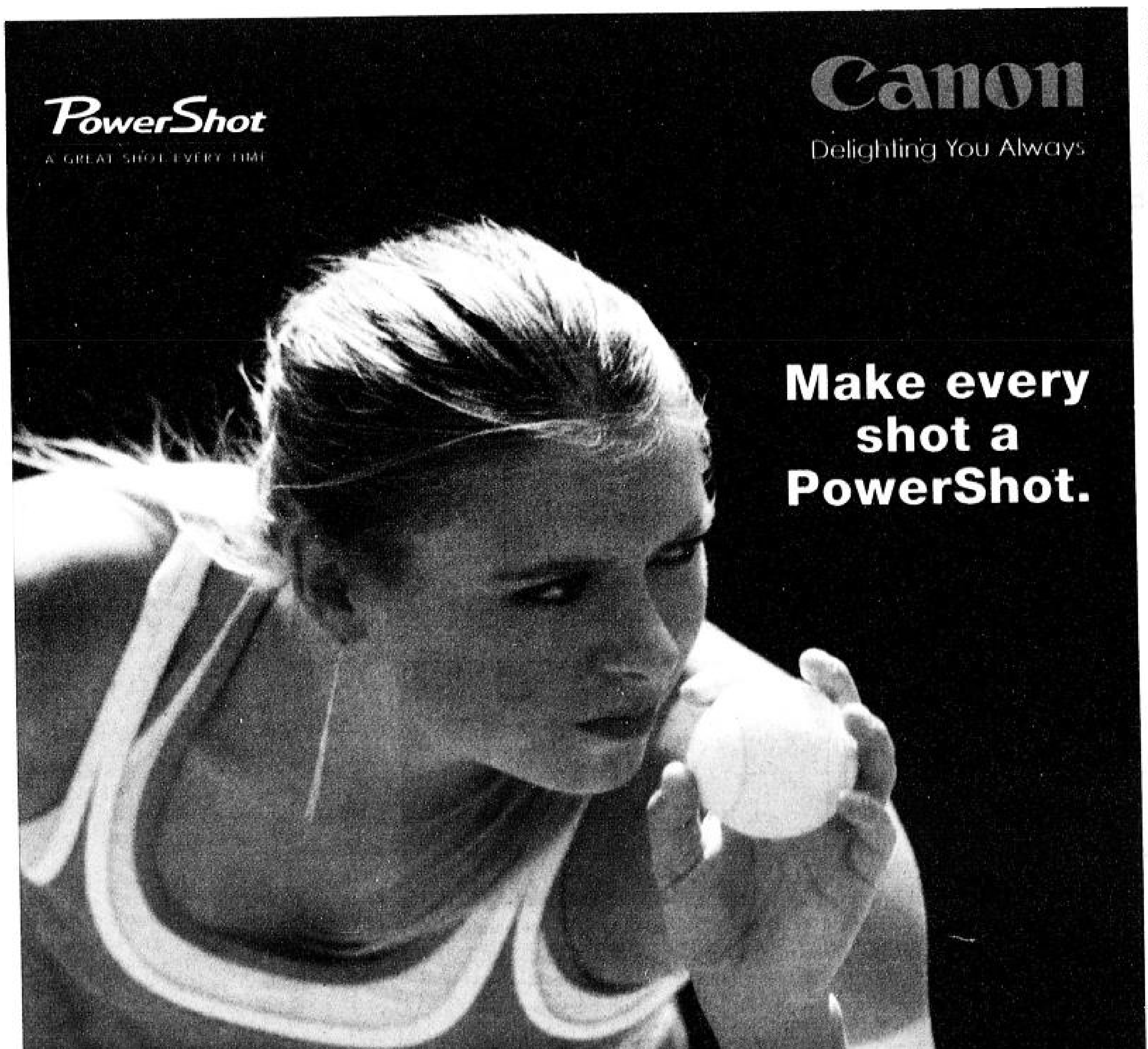

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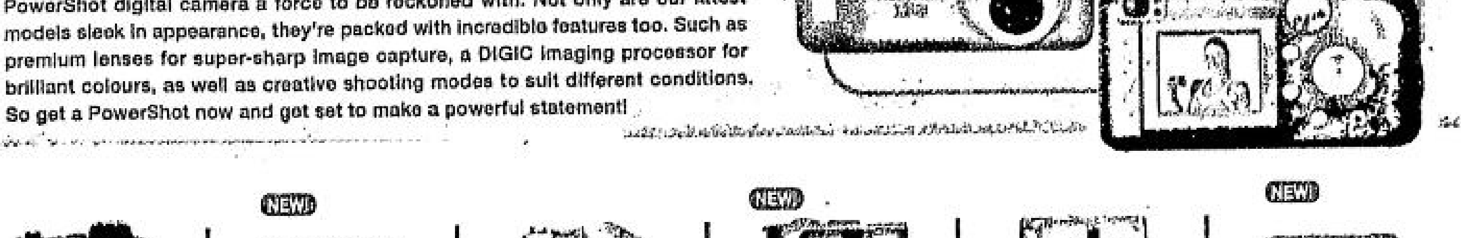

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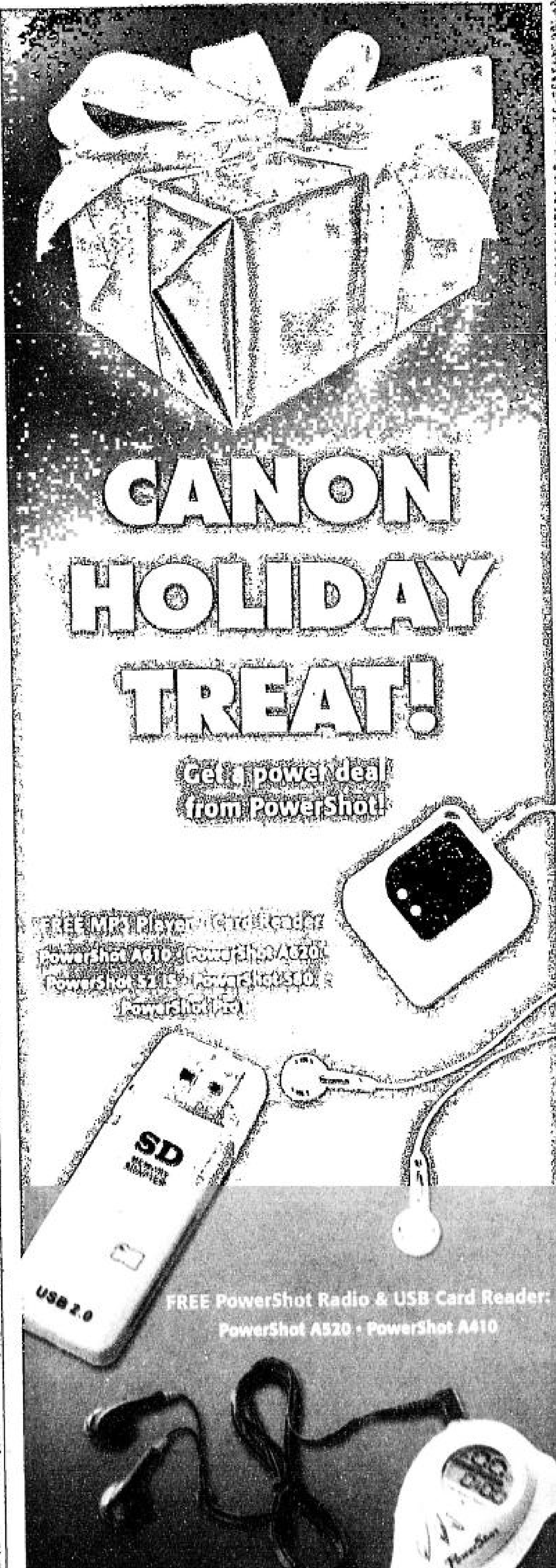

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Hollywood Dreaming with Julia, not Roberts

YENTL. "Yentl is a great fable, from a story by Isaac Bashevis Singer. It's a plum role for an actress, imagine Barbra Streisand having to be convincing as a 17-year-old boy! And the singing is fabulous."

By Albert Pili

JULIA CLARETE IS GOING TO Hollywood. How about that? Considering that her main motivation for joining the competitive reality show, Hollywood Dream, was to merely do a monologue and just have enough TV exposure to keep herself working, Julia got more than what she bargained for when she actually won.

And to think that the ruggedly beautiful actress was a dark horse in a tough playing field that included promising newcomers like Rafael Rossell, comebacking young stars like Baron Geissler and Roxie Barcelo and veterans like John Arcilla, Pinky Amador and award-winning actor Raymond Bagatsing—whom she beat by just a single vote—it made her victory even sweeter.

"I just want to keep working, that's all," Julia told this writer at the Eat Bulaga dressing room during a break from the show. "There was a time in my career when I wasn't getting work and no one would talk to me. It was a terrible feeling that I wouldn't want to go through again that's why I'm constantly working very hard on my craft because there's so many things to correct about me as an actress."

Julia's triumphant stint in Hollywood Dream is not the only Cinderella story worth writing a screenplay about. The life story of this spunky doe-eyed girl is inspiring as well. A big fan of John Lennon, she said her name was actually inspired by "Julia," a moving ballad from The Beatles' White Album that Lennon wrote as a tribute to his late mother.

She started her career in the hit kiddie gag show, Ang TV. Small roles in movies and the legitimate stage followed while her love for music also eventually found her singing in lounge bars. But it was a lead role in an Extelcom commercial that led to her big break.

"I became a part of ABS-CBN's Star Circle Batch 4," she recalls. "But it wasn't until I got the contravida role in the soap opera 'Sa Puso Ko'y Iingatan Ka' that I really got noticed."

Playing the scheming Sheila, Julia made life very difficult for Judy Ann Santos in the show and as a result got the thumbs up of the critics and the thumbs down from the fans that hated her character.

"It didn't bother me at all that I was playing the villain or the bad girl," she says. "I was really happy to get that role and was really challenged with the character. As for the fans feeling that way towards me then, I didn't mind. I actually found it reassuring, in fact. The more people hat-

HOLLYWOOD/C3

HP recommends Windows® XP Professional.

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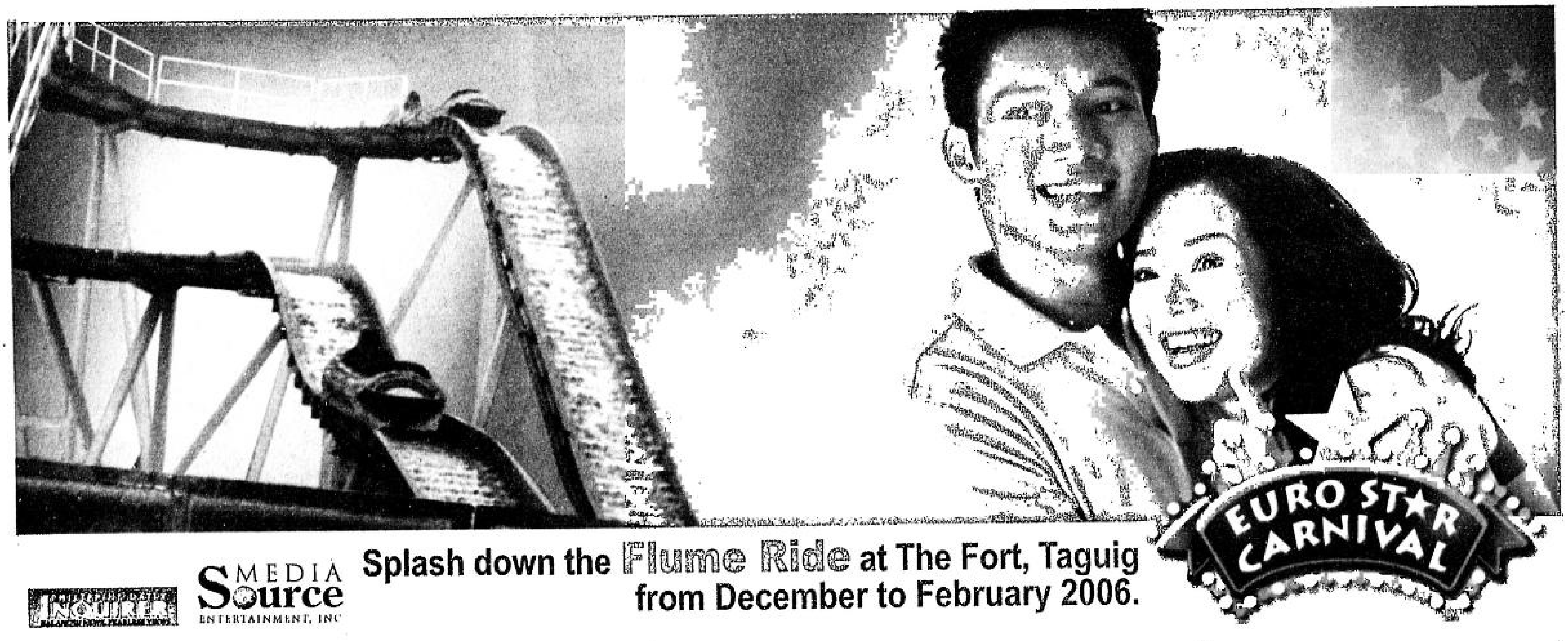
^Approved by DTI-NCR. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 6665, Series of 2005



Splash down the Flume Ride at The Fort, Taguig from December to February 2006.
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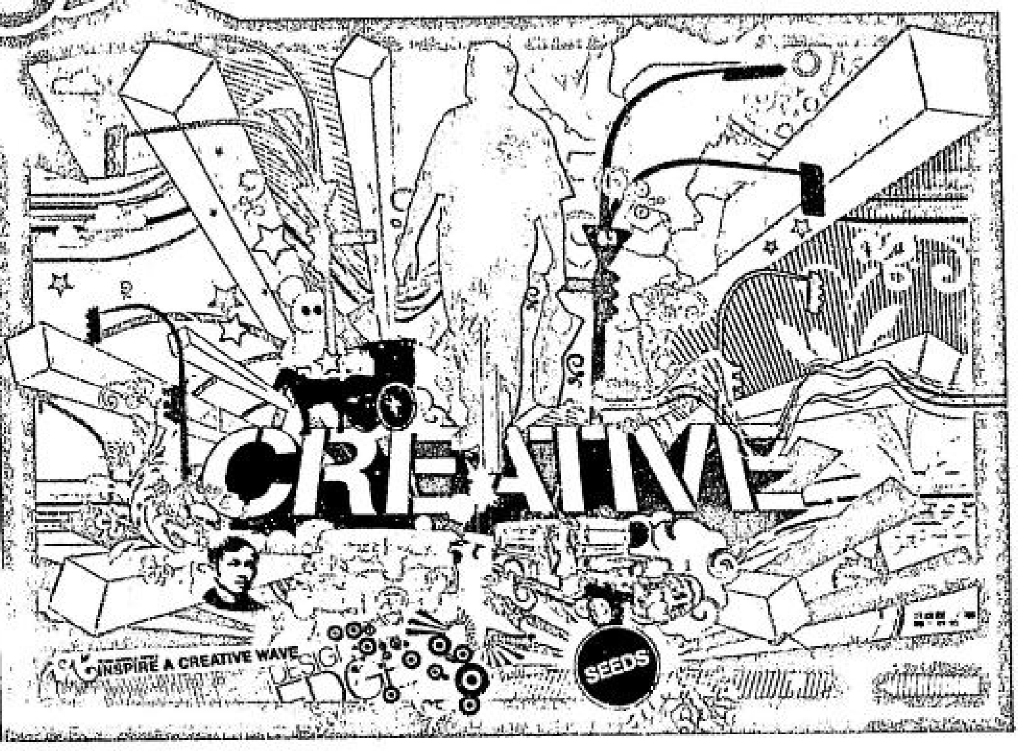
TeamManila://
Graphic Design
Studio://

Cracking the code on 'Cool'

By James Gabrillo and Pepe Diokno

TEAM MANILA, A MULTI-disciplinary graphic design studio, is cutting through the clutter and staying ahead of the curve. They've assembled a notable portfolio of award-winning communication and design projects. The squad experiments, improves, and impresses; juggling ideas like using varied printing materials to generate completely new pieces.

CRACKING/ D3



ARTQUAKE. The first of many Super and Team Manila collaborations

Reunion ng buong pamilya.
Umaapaw na Noche Buena.
Mga parol na
nagniningning.
Mga batang nagka-caroling.
Puto bumbong at Misa de Gallo.
Sangkatutak na aguinaldo.

Sa mga tradisyong tulad nito
nagmumula ang sarap ng
Paskong Pilipino.
At ngayon, lalong sasarap pa dahil
nagbalik na ang ice cream
na paborito mo.
Richer, creamier, chunkier
Magnolia Ice Cream.
May apat na Gold Label flavors
tulad ng Cookies & Cream,
Double Dutch, Dulce de Leche,
at Rocky Road.
At anim na Classics tulad ng
Strawberry, Chocolate, Ube,
Mango, Sweet Corn, at Vanilla.
Ang tunay na Magnolia Ice Cream
na kinagiliwan ng ilang henerasyon
ng Pilipino mula pa noon,
nagbabalik para pasarapin ang
ating Pasko ngayon.

Wala nang sasarap pa sa
Magnolia Ice Cream
ngayong Pasko.
At wala nang sasarap pa sa
Paskong Pilipino!

Ang sarap ng Pasko.

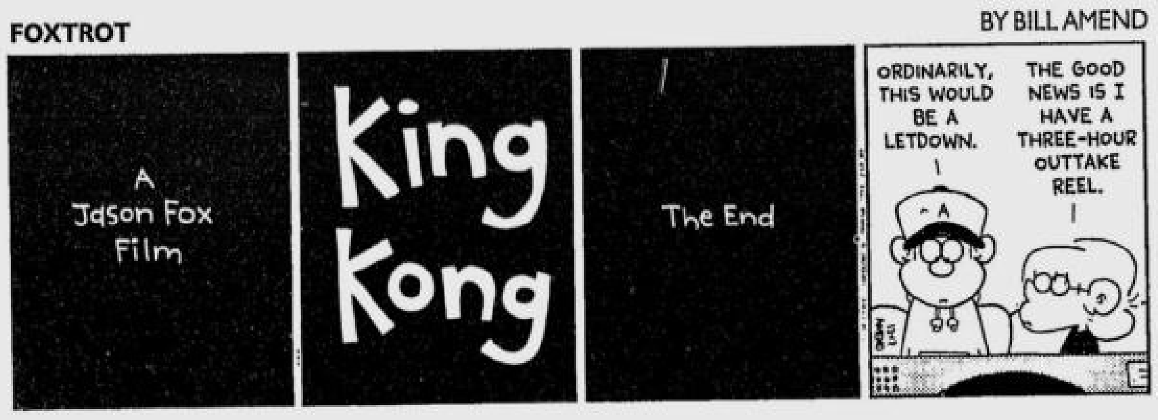
Magnolia®
ICE CREAM

Magpakailanman
Magnolia

Ang favorite ice cream mo, mas pinasarap pa lalo. Para sa mas maligayang Pasko!

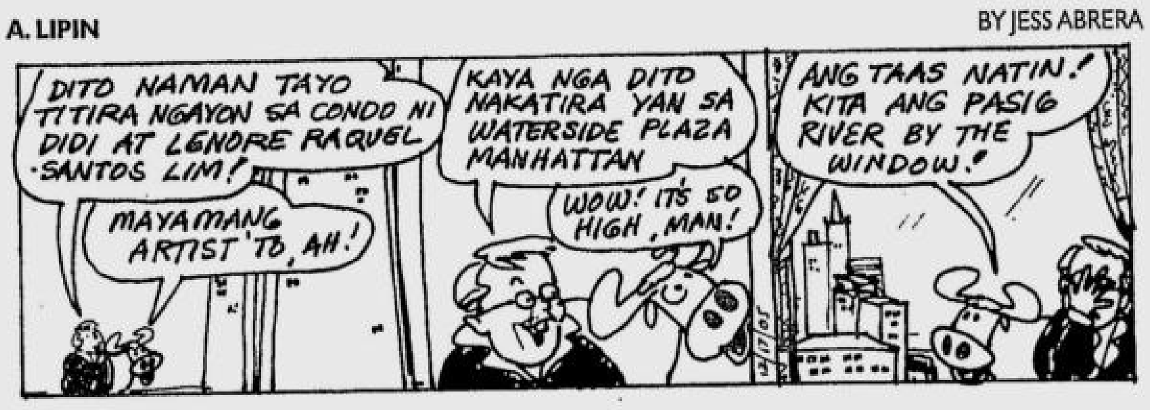
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


A Jason Fox Film
King Kong
The End
ORDINARILY, THIS WOULD BE A LETDOWN.
THE GOOD NEWS IS I HAVE A THREE-HOUR OUTTAKE REEL.

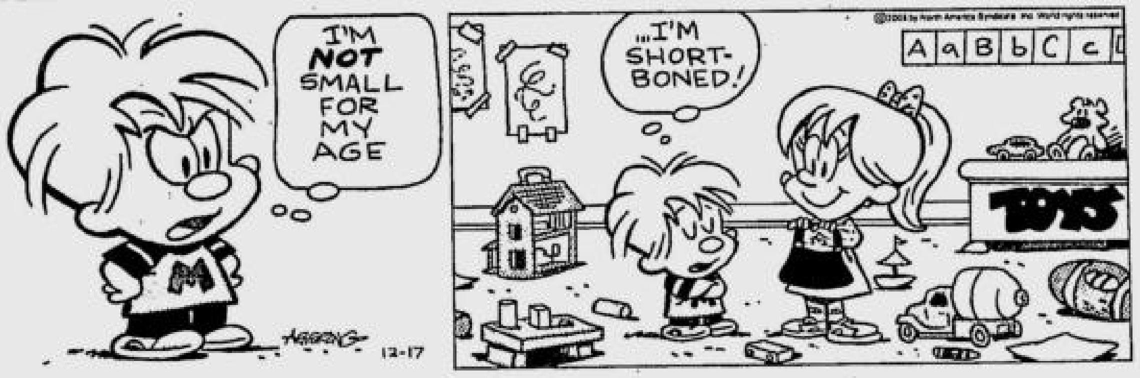
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


DITO NAMAN TAYO TITIRA NGAYON SA CONDO NI DIDI AT LENORE RAQUEL SANTOS LIM!
MAYAMANG ARTIST 'TO, AH!
KAYA NGA DITO NAKATIRA YAN SA WATERSIDE PLAZA MANHATTAN
WOW! IT'S SO HIGH, MAN!
ANG TAAS NATIN! KITA ANG PASIG RIVER BY THE WINDOW!

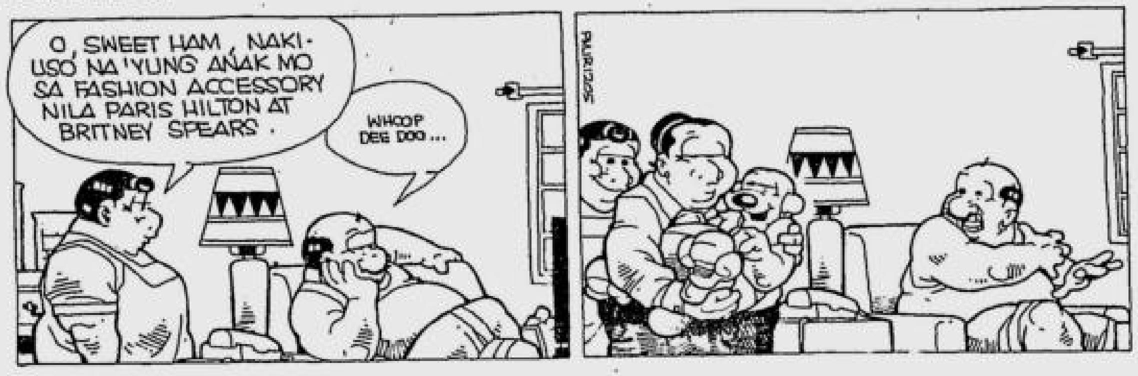
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I'M NOT SMALL FOR MY AGE
...I'M SHORT-BONED!
TOYS
12-17

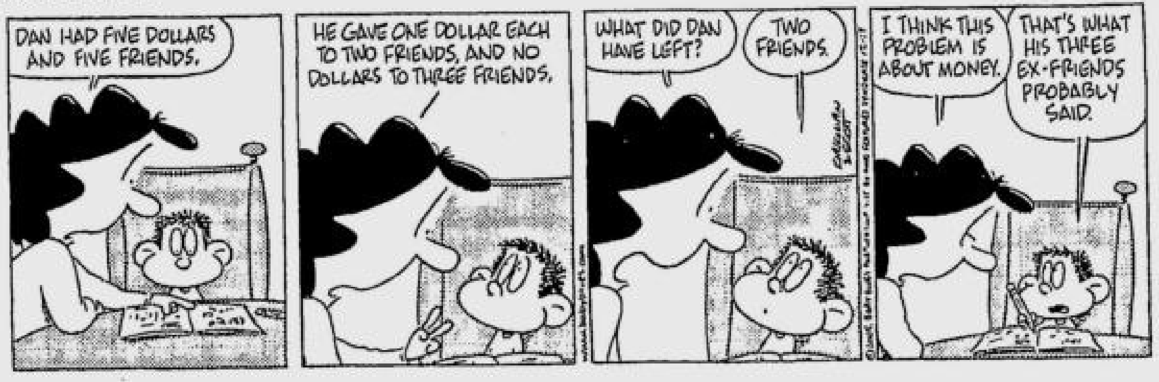
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


O, SWEET HAM, NAKI-USO NA 'YUNG ANAK MO SA FASHION ACCESSORY NILA PARIS HILTON AT BRITNEY SPEARS.
WHOOP DEE DOO...

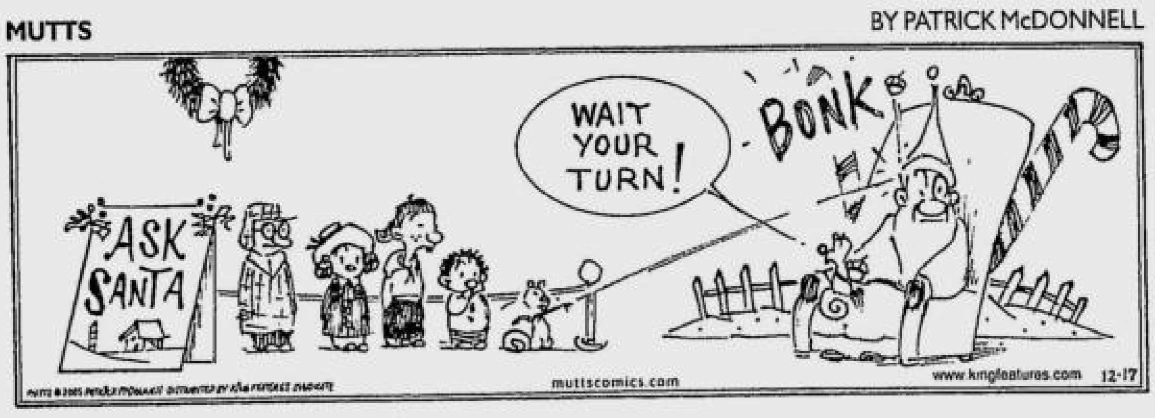
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


DAN HAD FIVE DOLLARS AND FIVE FRIENDS.
HE GAVE ONE DOLLAR EACH TO TWO FRIENDS, AND NO DOLLARS TO THREE FRIENDS.
WHAT DID DAN HAVE LEFT?
TWO FRIENDS.
I THINK THIS PROBLEM IS ABOUT MONEY.
THAT'S WHAT HIS THREE EX-FRIENDS PROBABLY SAID.

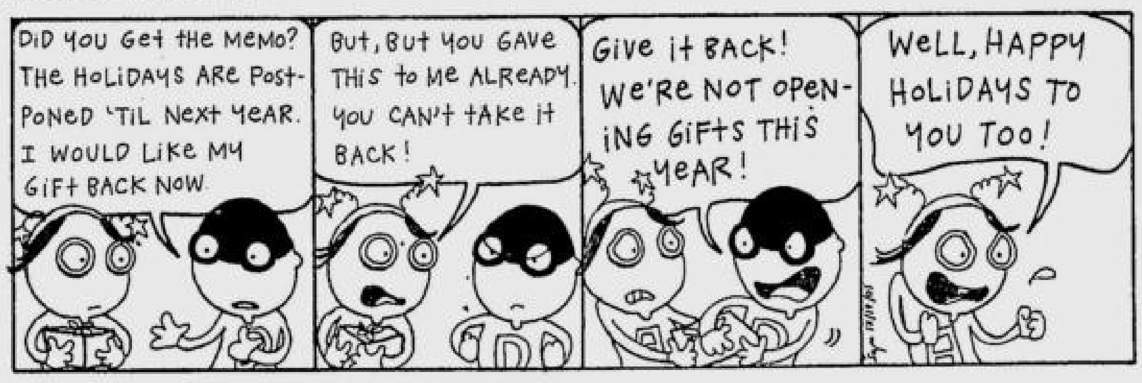
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


ASK SANTA
WAIT YOUR TURN!
BONK
mutts comics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
12-17

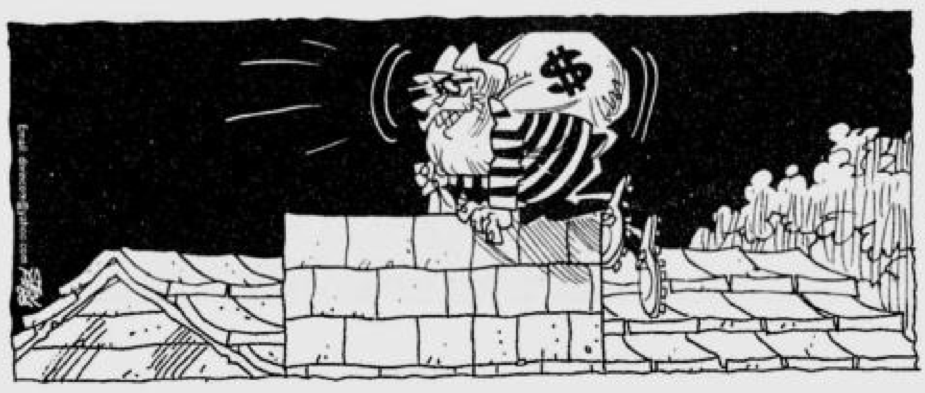
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


DID YOU GET THE MEMO? THE HOLIDAYS ARE POSTPONED 'TIL NEXT YEAR. I WOULD LIKE MY GIFT BACK NOW.
BUT, BUT YOU GAVE THIS TO ME ALREADY. YOU CAN'T TAKE IT BACK!
GIVE IT BACK! WE'RE NOT OPENING GIFTS THIS YEAR!
WELL, HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO YOU TOO!

DIVINE COMEDY

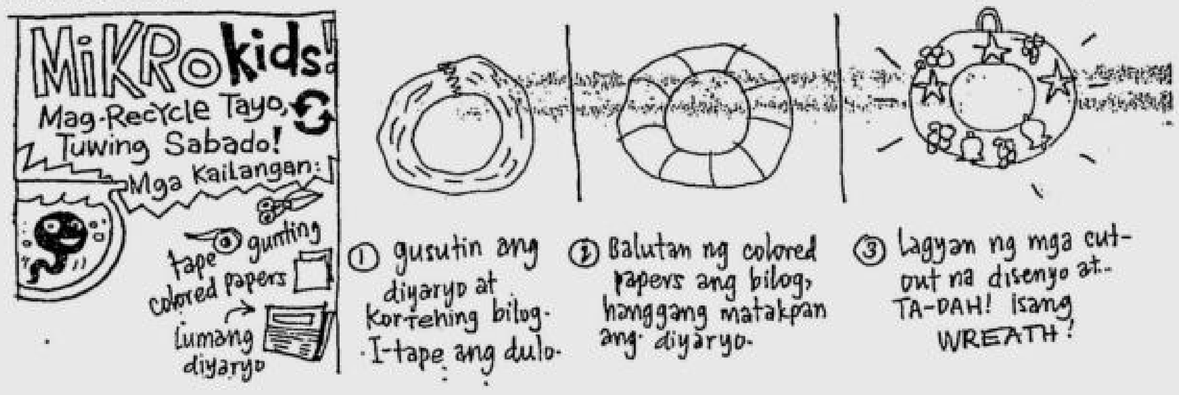
BY STEVEN PABALINAS



SANTA CLAUS' PRE-CONVERSION LIFE

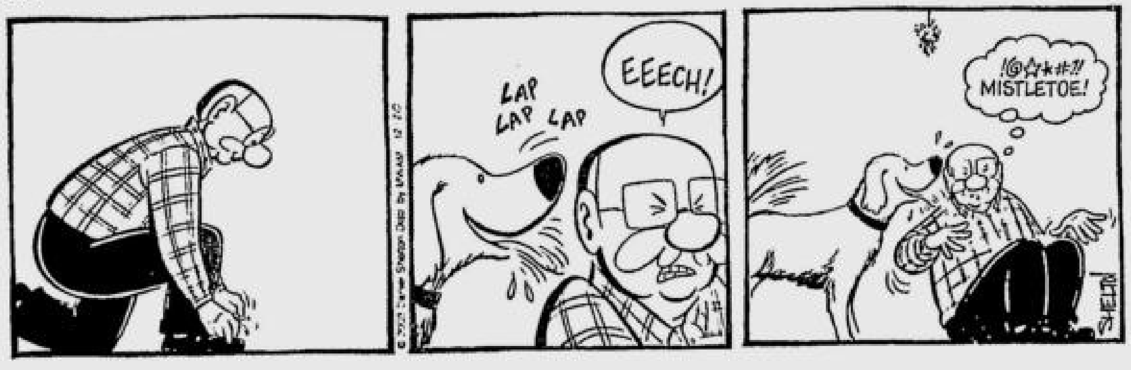
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MiKRo kids!
Mag-Recycle Tayo, Tuwing Sabado!
Mga Kailangan:
tape
gunting
colored papers
lumang diyaryo
① gusutin ang diyaryo at korteking bilog. I-tape ang dulo.
② Balutan ng colored papers ang bilog, hanggang matakpan ang diyaryo.
③ Lagyan ng mga cut-out na disenyo at.. TA-DAH! Isang WREATH!

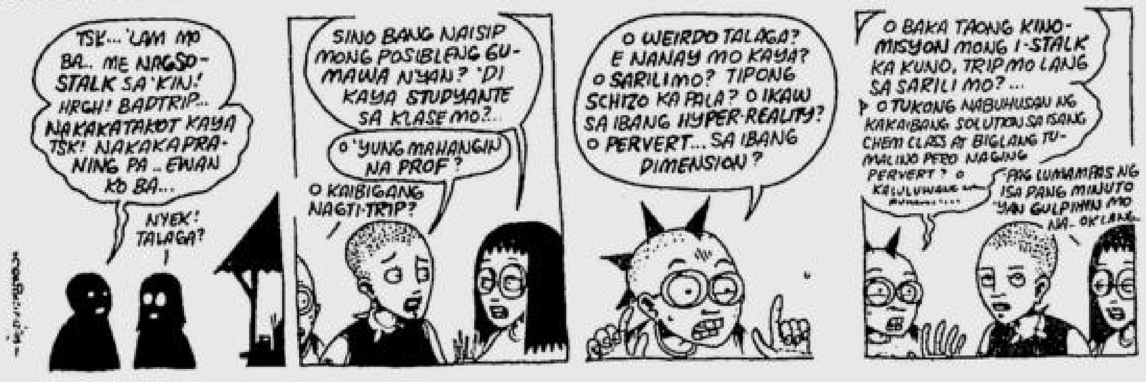
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


LAP LAP LAP
EEECH!
!@☆*#!! MISTLETOE!

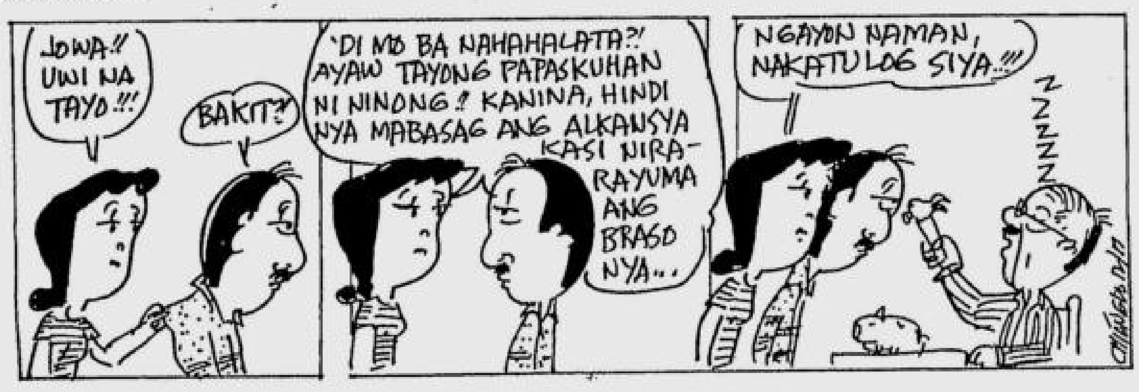
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TSK... 'LAM MO BA.. ME NAGSO-STALK SA 'KIN! HRGH! BADTRIP... NAKAKATAKOT KAYA TSK! NAKAKAPRA-NING PA.. EWAN KO BA...
NYEK! TALAGA?
SINO BANG NAISIP MONG POSIBLENG GUMAWA NYAN? 'DI KAYA STUDYANTE SA KLASE MO?..
O 'YUNG MAHANGIN NA PROF?
O KAIBIGANG NAGTI-TRIP?
O WEIRDO TALAGA? E NANAY MO KAYA? O SARILI MO? TIPONG SCHIZO KA PALA? O IKAW SA IBANG HYPER-REALITY? O PERVERT... SA IBANG DIMENSION?
O BAKA TAONG KINO-MISYON MONG I-STALK KA KUNO, TRIP MO LANG SA SARILI MO?...
O TUKONG NABUHUSAN NG KAKAIBANG SOLUTION SA ISANG CHEM CLASS AT BIGLANG TUMALINO PERO NAGING PERVERT? O KALULUWANG...
PAG LUMAMPAS NG ISA PANG MINUTO 'YAN GULPIHIN MO NA.. OK LANG..

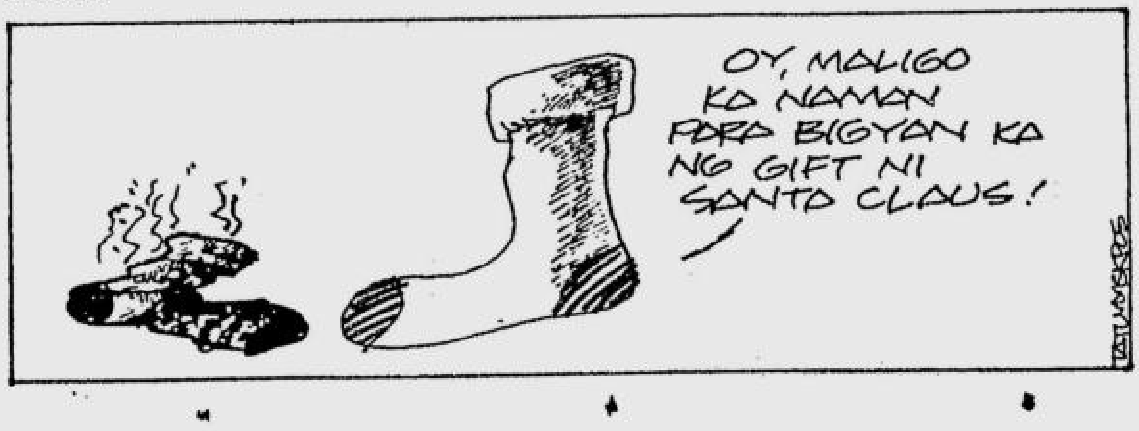
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA!! UWI NA TAYO!!!
BAKIT?
'DI MO BA NAHAHALATA?! AYAW TAYONG PAPASKUHAN NI NINONG! KANINA, HINDI NYA MABASAG ANG ALKANSYA KASI NIRA-RAYUMA ANG BRASO NYA...
NGAYON NAMAN, NAKATULOG SIYA!!!
ZZZZZ

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, MALIGO KA NAMAN PARA BIGYAN KA NG GIFT NI SANTA CLAUS!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: Despite your philosophical journeys, you are grounded and realistic. You aim to do things well. You're very serious about whatever you pursue. (You're like a dog with a bone.) Because of this, others know you're dependable and reliable. You're in touch with your physical senses. The year ahead is full of exciting new avenues and beginnings. Enjoy!

Birthdate of: Giovanni Ribisi, actor; Bill Pullman, actor; Erskine Caldwell, author.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a wonderful day to relax at home and goof off. Relax and entertain family members. However, avoid important family decisions. Do not volunteer for anything. Agree to nothing about family businesses.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a bit of a goofy day. Do not be rigid. Give up your routine! Expect shortages and delays. It's a very bad day to shop (except for food).

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Although you're tempted to focus on money, possessions and shopping, don't do this today. This is a terrible day to buy anything other than food. Just enjoy life.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): The Moon is in your sign today; however, it is what astrologers call void-of-course. This means it's wonderful for creativity, fun, pleasure, meditating or doing yoga. But it's a terrible day to spend money.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your best option today is to just lie low in the weeds. Keep a low profile. Don't spend money. Agree to nothing important. You know the drill.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is a perfectly fine day to enjoy friends and schmoozing with others. However, it's a poor day to spend money or make any kind of commitment. (Of course, you can buy food!)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Quite probably, you'll do something that calls attention to yourself. Let's hope it is of your own choosing. Discussions with parents and bosses are significant.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're hungry for adventure. You want to do something different. That's fine. My one caution to you is this: Don't spend money today, if possible.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is an extremely poor day to make financial decisions or decisions about shared property. Nevertheless, that's what you're tempted to do. Don't do it.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Today the Moon opposes your sign, and it is void-of-course. What does this mean? It means that you can enjoy discussions with partners and loved ones, but don't agree to anything important.

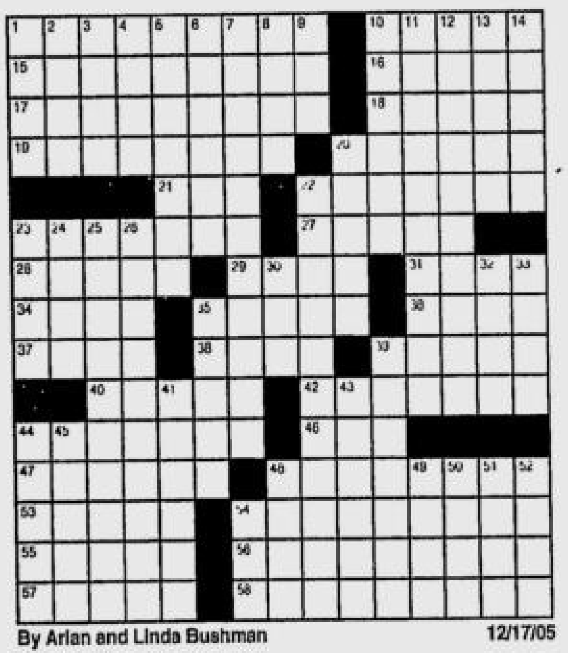
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Expect delays, shortages and little snafus at work today. There's no way around it. Just be patient and go with the flow.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're in a party mood! Great. This is a great day to enjoy the company of others. However, spend money only for food.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Unravels
10 Drive forward
15 Frolicsome
16 Knock off
17 Military units of ground troops
18 Overeagerness to act
19 Go along with
20 Hosed off
21 Cry of discovery
22 Submits for approval
23 Interminable
27 Sidled
28 Prohibition phrase
29 Up in the air
31 Uncommon
34 Crash-site grp.
35 Sky blue
36 Pieces of pelvises
37 Top of the line
38 Diminutive
39 Bothersome buzzers
40 Shakespearean forest
42 Boarding passage
44 Lugging laboriously
46 Important period
47 Flirtatious eyers
48 Bully
53 Light fabric for curtains
54 Apparently valid
55 Marine fliers
56 Makes wedding plans
57 Bob of "America's Funniest Home Videos"
58 Enhanced the desirability of

DOWN
1 Toxin fighters
2 Former spouses
3 Wrinkly-faced pets
4 Irish Rose's lover
5 Leftover piece
6 Soul singer Franklin
7 Provocative
8 Within: pref.
9 Religious figs.
10 Yin and yang book
11 Rambling
12 Legislated
13 Fragrant compound
14 Yorkshire city
20 Color anew
22 Keep cool
23 Buchanan or Ferber
24 Dorothy's pooch
25 Getting tangled up
26 U.S. Grant's counterpart
30 Amusement
32 Meter maid of the Beatles song
33 Child's play
35 Grace enders
39 Bothers incessantly
41 Superlatively ominous
43 Provoke
44 Miniature bays
45 Ancient Greek marketplace
48 Frittered away
49 Tarry
50 "Voice of Israel" author
51 Der ___ (Adenauer)
52 ___ off (very angry)
54 Ltr. addenda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By Arlan and Linda Bushman
Chicago, IL

12/17/05

Friday's Puzzle Solved

R	A	B	E	■	S	E	R	F	S	■	S	F	P	D
E	C	O	N	■	C	L	A	R	A	■	C	L	A	Y
N	E	W	T	■	H	O	T	E	L	C	H	A	I	N
A	L	L	I	S	O	N	■	D	L	O	■	G	R	E
L	A	I	C	A	L	■	J	A	I	L	S	■	■	■
■	■	N	E	G	A	T	E	■	E	D	I	B	L	E
B	E	G	■	G	R	O	W	L	S	■	M	O	O	R
I	M	P	L	Y	■	N	E	O	■	D	I	X	O	N
O	M	I	T	■	D	E	L	P	H	I	■	I	K	E
G	A	N	D	H	I	■	R	E	A	G	A	N	■	■
■	■	■	S	I	S	S	Y	■	R	I	N	G	E	R
U	S	A	■	N	O	N	■	A	S	T	O	R	I	A
T	H	I	R	D	W	A	T	C	H	■	M	I	E	N
A	O	N	E	■	N	I	T	R	E	■	I	N	I	T
H	T	T	P	■	S	L	Y	E	R	■	E	G	O	S

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12/17/05

MANILA
Design
SIOPAO
PANSIT
TURON
MANGA
GOTO
DABOY
TAPSILOG
PAN DE SA

COOL *SA KALYE*. Team Manila shirts are cool and Pinoy-priced!

Cracking the code on 'Cool'

From page D1

Their trademark is merging basic, simplistic graphics into strong, sleek, and symbolic imagery. Spotting connections between disciplines and mediums in ways other generations never could, Team Manila is starting a riot.

Loads of fresh ideas are thrown around and few work. You seem to have figured it out better than most. What are some of the ways you do things differently? We try to inject something local into our projects, so if ever the work comes out internationally it represents our country. We're always on the lookout for creative collaborations with local artists and clients.

What are some of your latest projects? We just recently did the Fashion INQUIRER Magazine with Not Enough Circuses. We're currently finishing the TM shirts that are coming out this month. We're working on a collaboration exhibit with a local theme, and developing the second version of teammanila.com.

What are the things in the country that you're itching to make-over? At the top of our list are the Department of Tourism and the Naia Terminal 1.

What's the most extreme team building session you've ever done? Running a three-day work marathon for a project deadline. Nothing beats camaraderie under pressure and sleep deprivation.

What are TM's long-term goals? One, to create a branding for the Philippines, from the signages in the barangay to the total look of the government. Two, to be the premiere graphic design studio in the country, and work with all the top creatives locally. And three, to collect a large body of work that influences new designers.

Talk about TM's overall brand and design philosophy. Graphic design is not just a corporate service but a tool for change. Graphic designers and clients should think about design as a way to persuade social change. We believe that if it looks good, it will make you feel good.

One day, we will... teach at the TM Art and Design Institute; visit the TM Designer Hotel, Manila; help the TM Foundation for the Arts. Raymund (Punzalan) wants to die of paper cuts counting his money, while Jowee (Alviar) wants to retire at TM Island, Palawan.

Manila
Jeepney
MANILA
QC
PASIG
MAKATI
MARIKINA

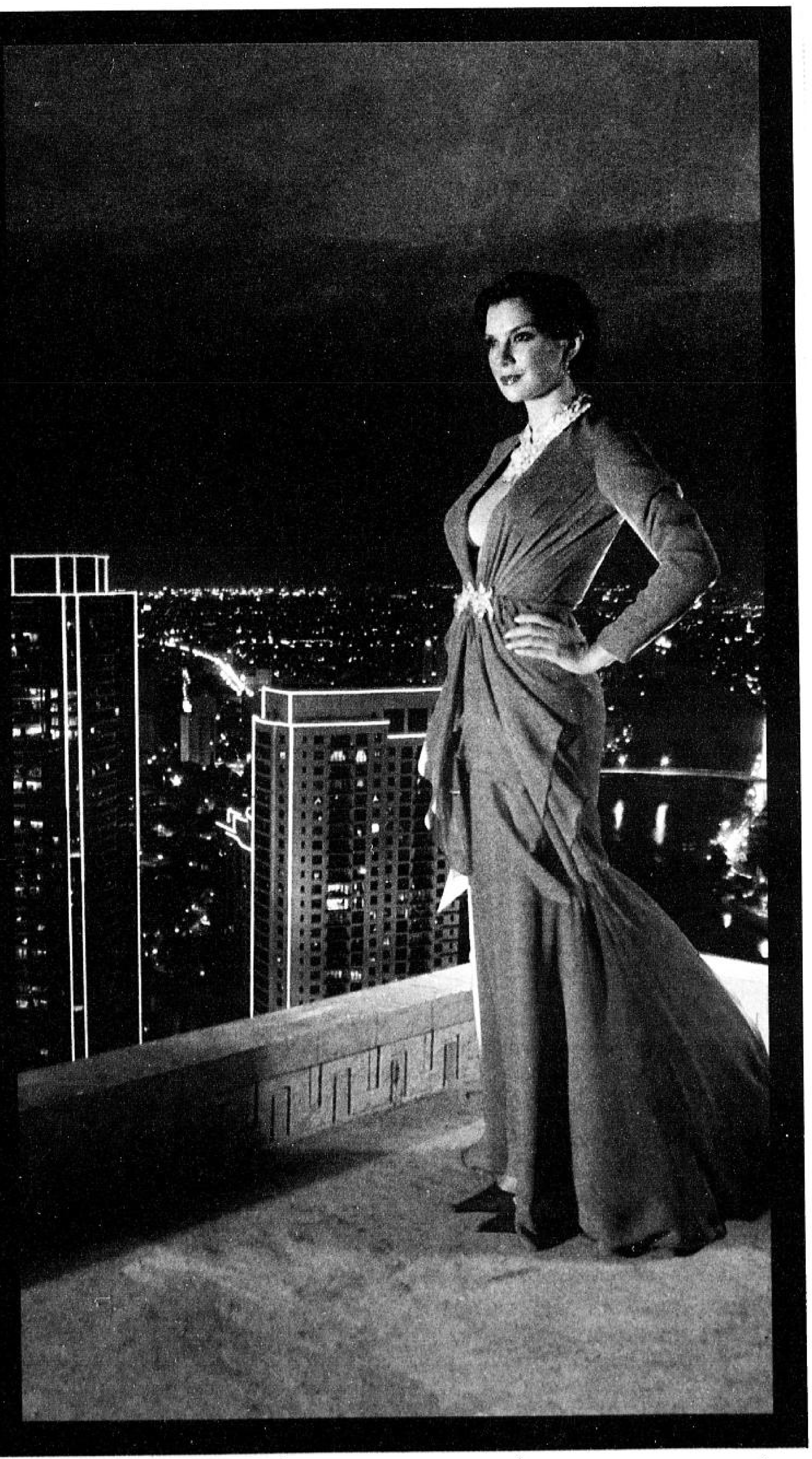
I AM PINOY. The perfect shirts to show your pride in

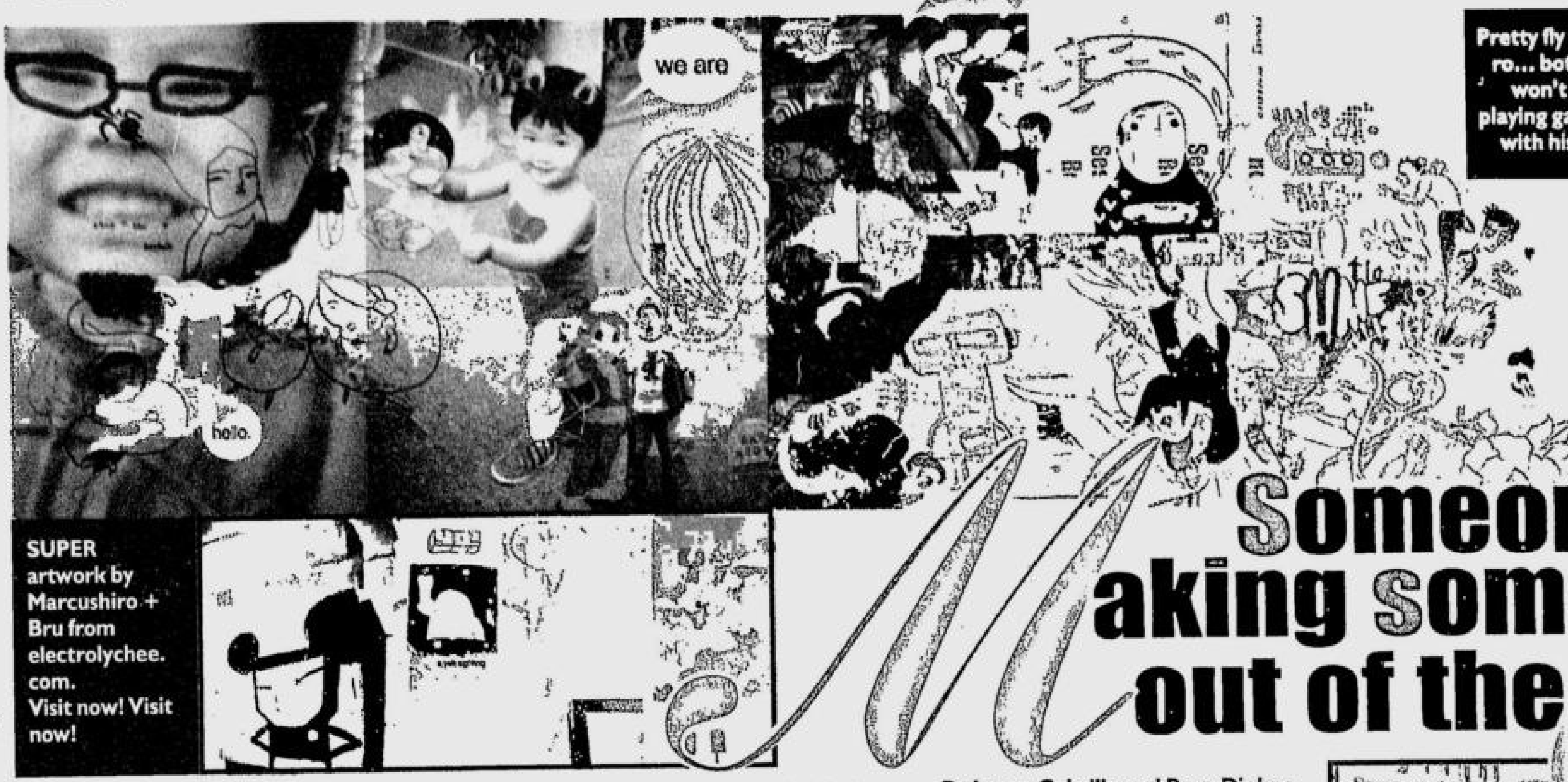
One
villa
in the
sky at
Number
One
Rockwell.

Introducing, the new One Rockwell.
The only high rise with a Z-shaped loft.
To see is to believe. Imagine a unit that spans
the entire length of the building. So that you can see
the sunrise in the East and set in the West.

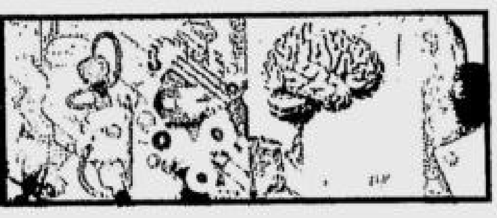
Own a Rockwell unit for as low as Php 16,500 per month
and attractive payment terms.

One Rockwell
Call 890-6888 or visit www.e-rockwell.com





SUPER artwork by Marcushiro + Bru from electrolychee.com. Visit now! Visit now!



Pretty fly for a ro... bot! He won't stop playing games with his art.

Marcushiro's got a penchant for balancing pandemonium

electrolychee

Someone's Making Something out of the Ordinary

By James Gabrillo and Pepe Diokno

IN TIMES WHERE EVERYone's encouraged to be just sartorially idiosyncratic, Marcushiro is out there—in his own words—"merging digital and analog art like a poetic dance to a punk rock tune on acid."

In his first one-man show last November entitled "Bitter Hatshop with Volume Beyond Control," Marcushiro proved that his deep colors and vulgar pop humor are something to look out for.

He is inspired by the artistry of people and clusters like Jon Burgerman, Joe Sorren, Pete Fowler, James Jarvis, The Killer Gerbil, The Yok, Artvsts, Give Me Back My Sunday, James Jean, Fecal Face, Pants Press Sketchblog, and Wooster Collective. He's a believer of "the magic of furry hats and fun art."

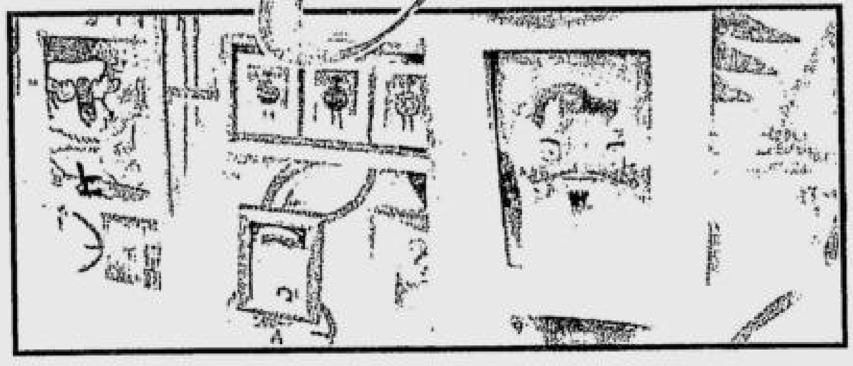
Give Marcushiro a cache of colors and he'll turn it into a strangely Super! something.

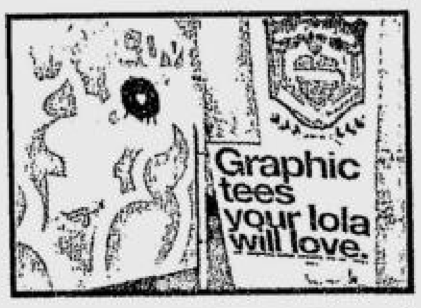
That's a cool name. Did you get it from your parents?

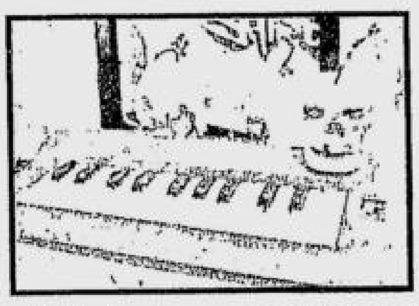
No. I got it from a Romanian robot friend.

What are the projects you're working on now?

We just finished the website for our Design & Strange Creations Lab, electrolychee.com, with Bru, and the design projects we got from it. I'm also experimenting on some "electrolychee" merchandise to be launched next year.




Graphic tees your lola will love.



Talk about your overall design philosophy.

My design philosophy is always to make the most aesthetically pleasing imagery and to find the most effective way to get my message across. I like to innovate in terms of style, elevate my design and educate the masses through my works.

"Leave your worldy concerns at home; Marcushiro's artworks have no deeper meaning other than what's running in your silly little heads," is a line that comes up a lot on the Internet. Do you agree with it?

Yeah, I wrote it myself!

Art is for ...

Japan's sake. The Japanese made an art out of making fine *sake* drink!

What's the best thing someone's ever said about your work?

I was at awe when a Korean matador said it was *"magnifique!"*

From the outside, the art community looks like a small, tight-knit community. Is this a good thing?

I think it is *a good*. (Laughs)

How do you get the community to expand? For more people to join the art bandwagon?

We just have to continue inspiring people and be inspired in return.

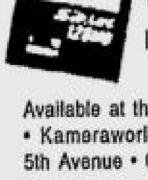
What makes you Super?

I'm keeping it real.

What's next for Marcushiro?

I guess I'll just follow my art where it leads me.

Kodak EasyShare V530
Kodak
Schneider-KREUZNACH C-VARIOGON 35-105mm



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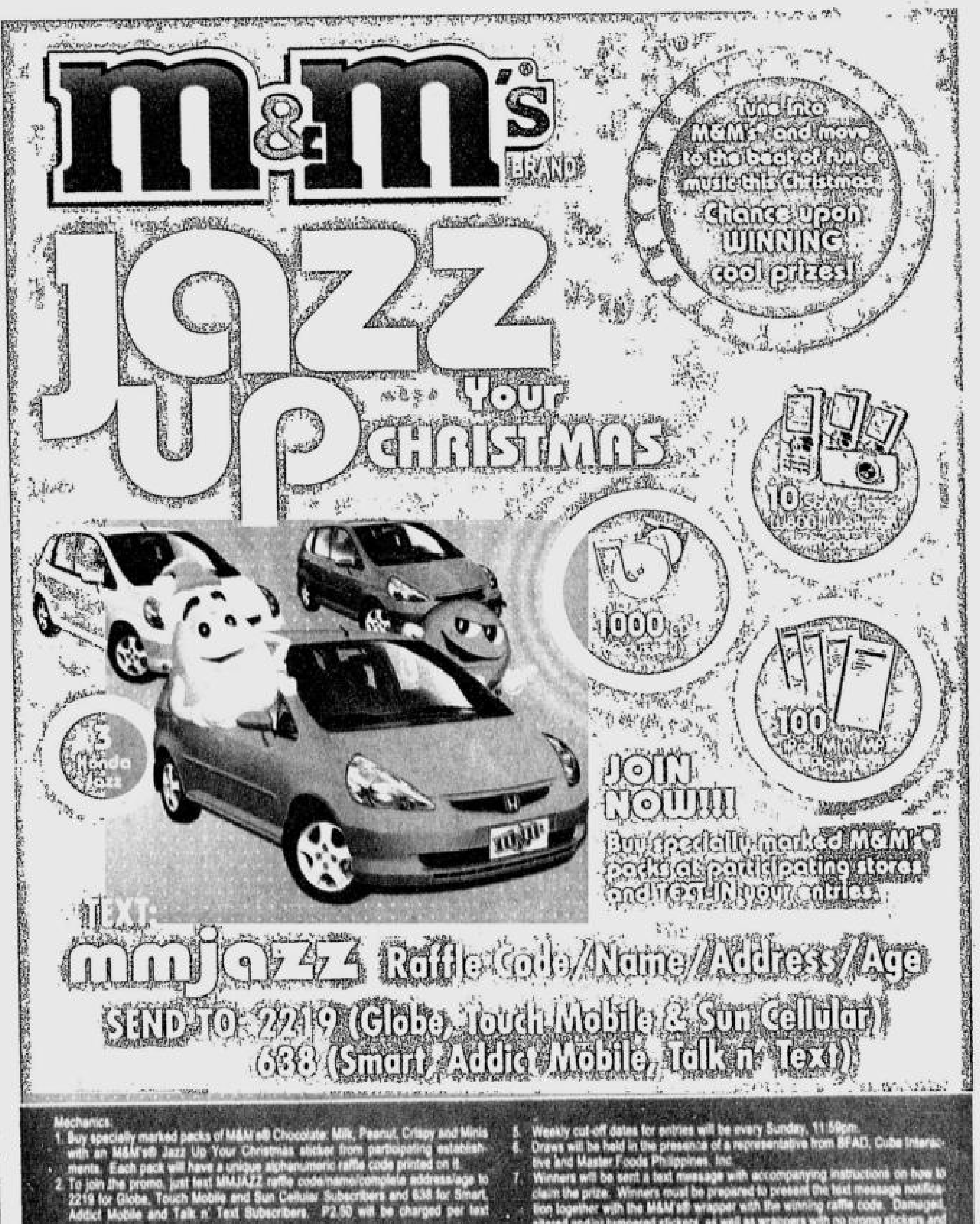

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Miguel Rosales has a small package

SIZE KING. Miguel Rosales shows off his Napa corner of the world.

Tim Yap

AND SO DOES **CHAT FORES.** Clearly, what I am talking about is neither about their anatomy or the size of their gifts this season.

Hot, hot, hot and oh-so-in-demand, interior designers Miguel and Chat may have small packages, but they carry a bi-iig stick!

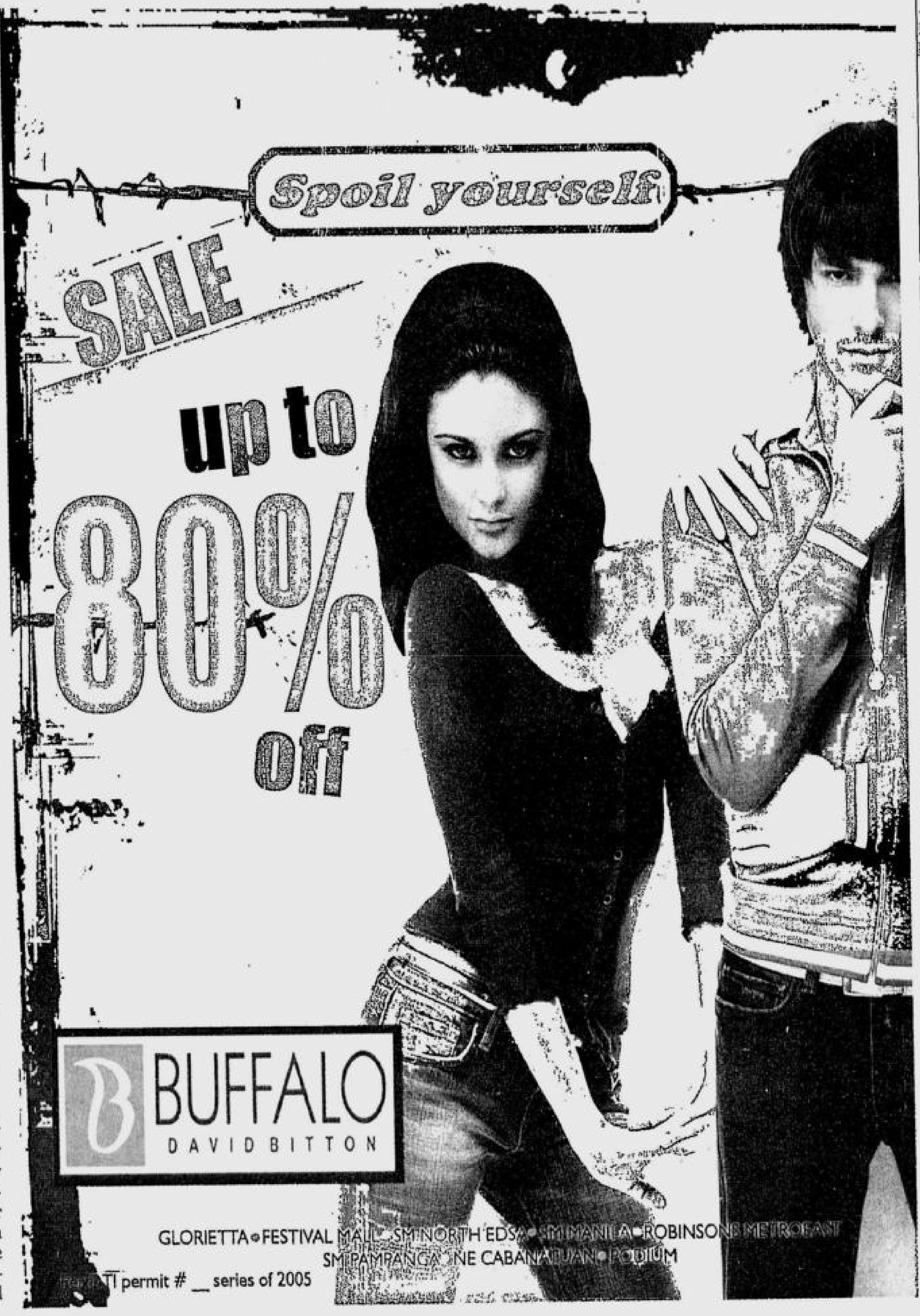
They showed me their bi-iig stick in terms of design last Monday when BMW drove us twenty five minutes south of Makati to experience Century Properties' latest home models that prove the adage "small is beautiful." The press tour to Canyon Ranch in Carmona, Cavite proved to be a pleasant afternoon filled with little surprises.

Like the iPod Nano, the new fleet of beamers and the model homes of Napa that Migs and Chat showed us—it proved how brilliant design minds can transform a small space and make it livable. And not just livable—Migs and Chat made every nook and cranny of Canyon Ranch's 50 sq m Napa duplex type homes as stylish and cozy as your favorite pair of party shoes. Add to that the creature comforts of the guided tour by Century muse **Jackie Cohen-Antonio.**

Tour of Napa

Homes these days cost more than both your arms and your legs, but surprisingly, the Napa Homes at Canyon Ranch cost only P1.8M—or for a low downpayment and only P300 a day (that's the cost of a prepaid card), you can now own your own spankingly stylish home! My good friend and Century big guy **Jigger Antonio** gave us an advanced tour of the other units, from Fremont, Delano and Atherton (all designed by design fairy godmothers **Ivy** and **Cynthia Almario**)—all named after cities of California, a haven where Pinoys dream of having luxury homes. "We want to give Filipinos a sophisticated home at a price they can afford," said Century Properties main diddy **Joey Antonio.**

MIGUEL/ E2



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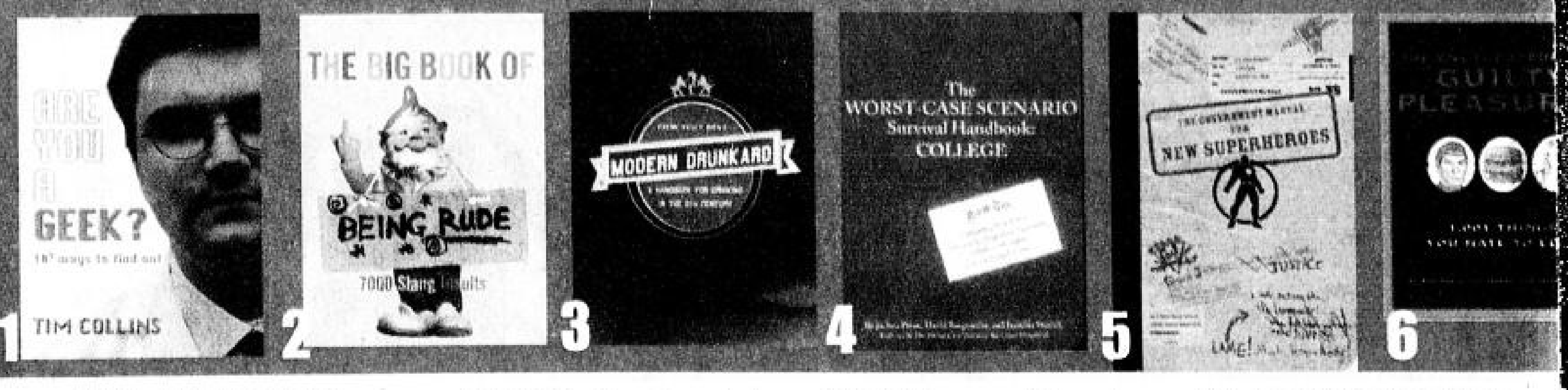
These Books are made for browsing

No presents? No problem! Super! has gift suggestions for those very picky pals, whether they really read or not

By Gino de la Paz

All books available at Fully Booked Power Plant, Gateway Mall and Promenade, Greenhills.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4
The WORST-CASE SCENARIO Survival Handbook: COLLEGE
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THE GOVERNMENT MANUAL FOR NEW SUPERHEROES
6
GUILTY PLEASURES

1 Are You A Geek?
Tim Collins
P799

Perfect for: Friends who think they're smooth and all that but are actually quite dorky and lame

Because: Duh, you wanna say "Get a life!" creatively.

2 The Big Book of Being Rude
P359

Perfect for: Your uptight, conservative and abnormally sheltered buddies

Because: It's almost 2006 and being uptight, conservative and abnormally sheltered doesn't fly anymore.

3 The Modern Drunkard: A Handbook for Drinking in the 21st Century
Frank Kelly Rich
P672

Perfect for: Social butterflies, moths, and other lush creatures

Because: Why just vomit when you can vomit the proper way?

4 The Worst Case Scenario Survival Handbook: College
Joshua Piven, David Borgenicht, and Jennifer Worick
P822

Perfect for: Students who wanna fake their way to the dean's list

Because: We all wanna know what to do when we're called on and don't know the answer, among other crucial things.

5 The Government Manual for New Superheroes
Matthew David Brozik and Jacob Sager Weinstein
P526

Perfect for: Peeps with a fetish for movies like "The Incredibles," "Sky High" and, okay, "Lastikman"

Because: All would-be superheroes need advice about secret identities, sidekicks, and sexy costumes.

6 The Encyclopedia of Guilty Pleasures: 1,001 Things You Hate To Love
Sam Stall, Lou Harry, and Julia Spalding
P822

Perfect for: Fans of Steven Seagal, "Jojo A. All The Way!!" and "Chowtime Na!"

Because: Hey, you're not alone. Sort of.

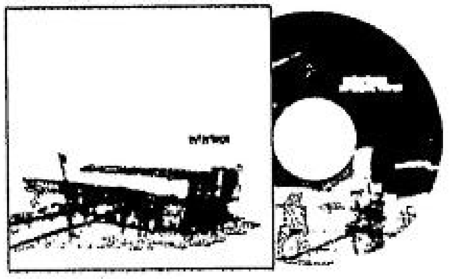
Strangely paired but Super

Introverted, absent-minded, and hopefully

By James Gabrillo and Pepe Diokno

IMAGINE A WINDY, SUNNY afternoon out on the shore, watching the sunset. Or a cold rainy day cuddling up with a book. Or a roadtrip to the beach with windows down. Yeah, they're cheesy-mushy situations, but when you're neck-high in work, these are things you long for.

In the middle of this hectic December, Super! could not stay away from Outer Hope's music. 'Cause it reminds us of the beach, or rainy days with nothing to do—cheesy, absent-minded, dreamy moments nobody can resist. Oh yes, we smell the cheese. (But it's a good thing!)



Outer Hope is a brother-sister band of Mike and Micaela Benedicto, with Joon Guillen on electric guitar. They launched their first studio recording, "Strangely Paired," at Mag:Net Katipunan last week, though their CD's been around for a while. (You can hear clips of their songs on their website, http://outerhope.com.) It was a packed place, and for as long as their sets were, we were all at the beach.

It'd be easier if we're on TV or something, but for Super! readers who haven't heard you yet, describe your music (vividly and whatever) ?

Our music is introverted, absent-minded, and hopefully dreamy. We used only electric and acoustic guitars and an electric piano for this record—it's very low-key in production. We're knee-deep in vocal harmony which is really the focal point of our music. "Strangely Paired" is a collection of songs about fictional forms of travel, and our reluctance to adulthood.

Did you guys go to music school?

Micaela: No. I went to Architecture school. I had piano and voice lessons at UP Conservatory and Yamaha for a brief period, but we're mostly self-taught.

Mike: I'll go ahead and mortify my sister by mentioning our singing lessons at Yamaha when we were kids. I took guitar lessons at home for a few months from this guy who was also from Yamaha when I was in the 3rd grade. I got sick of Tom Dooley and Where Have All the Flowers Gone so I decided to just figure it out for myself.

BOY WHO COULD FLY. Mike Benedicto of Outer Hope at Mag:Net

What are your goals? (Both far-off and in the short term)

Micaela: I'd like our record to reach as many people as possible. We're trying to get it online so people in other countries can buy them. Our dream is to score a movie, like Badly Drawn Boy for "About a Boy" or Air for "The Virgin Suicides". Personally, I'd love to score a musical play too.

Mike: Personally, I'd just really like to find our audience or them to find us. I'd be satisfied with a group of people who fuel us to create more music. And yeah, if anyone has a short film out there, we'd love to make the soundtrack for you.

What makes your band Super?

We think we were able to find our own sound and we stayed true to our original idea. The record's not perfect but we're very proud of it.

Do you guys have anything lined up for next year?

We're going to try and make a video. We're quite fickle about how it's going to

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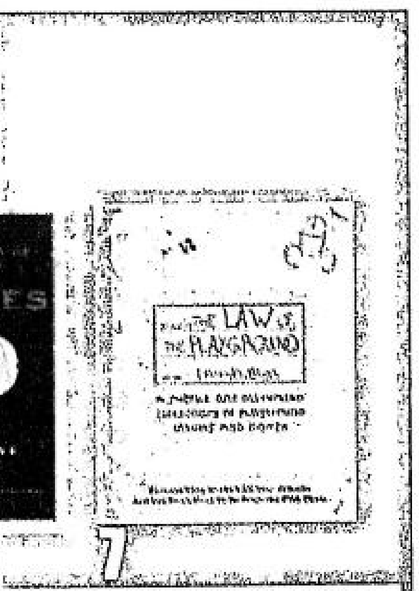


7 **The Law of the Playground**
Jonathan Blyth
P559

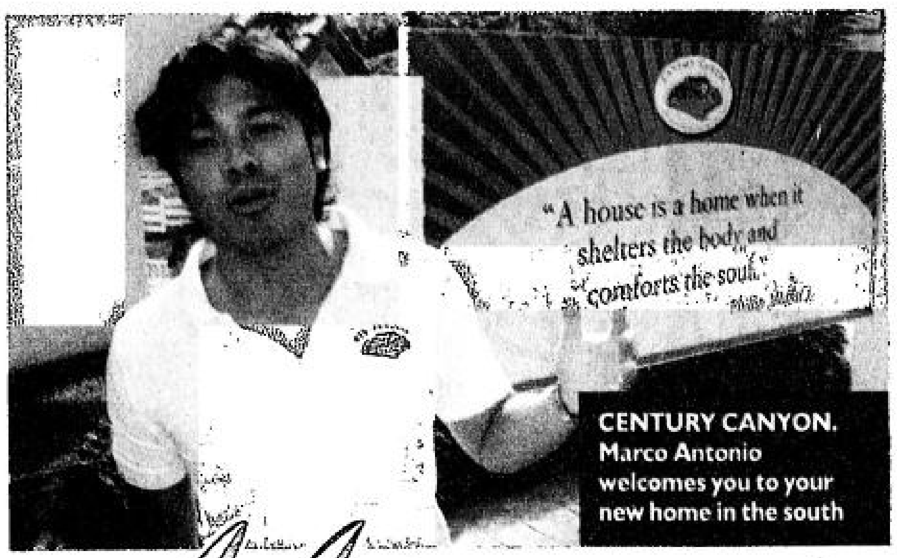
Perfect for: Those who delude themselves into thinking their childhood was a happy, perfect and magical time

Because: Face it, all children are scary animals. At least according to the dude who wrote this book.

dreamy

Ve're also trying to write new songs nother album which hopefully will ponsored by someone reading this view!

ere's more of Outer Hope at .outerhope.com. You can reach the at info@outerhope.com, or by send- message to 0928-2599884 or 0917- 131



"A house is a home when it shelters the body and comforts the soul."

CENTURY CANYON. Marco Antonio welcomes you to your new home in the south

LET'S CHAT HERE. The Napa home office as designed by Chat Fores.

Miguel Rosales has a small package

From page E1

It was only after lunch where an official and exclusive tour was led by my good buddy, Century Communities managing director **Marco Antonio**, in casual Monday mode wearing a white collared Canyon Ranch shirt and faded jeans. The weather seemed to cooperate as a gentle breeze blew as we traipsed along the property. It felt like Tagaytay on any fine day. Mega editor **Carla Sibal**'s hair still looked Barbie-perfect as ever. Seriously, she deserves a shampoo endorsement.

Aside from Carla, the wow views brought about by the terrains of the hills of Antipolo, Laguna De Bay, Mt. Banahaw, Mt. Makiling and the San Lazaro race track of the Manila Jockey Club made me wanna move to this part of the world, away from the polluted metropolis we call home.

"Let's buy this for ourselves for our retirement," announced my partner in prime **Celine Lopez**, "at thirty!" And then she suggested a time share program for our Canyon Ranch homes.

'Golf Belt' location

Why not? Celine will be in close proximity to shop spots Alabang Town Center, Festival Mall and SM South while I will be close to Brent International School, where uh, my kids will study. And our party place? There's Laguna Technopark where I'm sure DJ **Manolet Dario** will be spinning his tunes. Wait, you mean it's NOT a club?!

Oh well, there are more than your fair share of golf clubs around, with Canyon Ranch being the "golf belt" of the country, so maybe I can just throw my parties there.

I've always wanted a weekend home a la Hamptons to get away from the city whenever the weekend approaches. Saturday night slumber parties, Sunday afternoon barbecues, pool gathering with neighbors and much more … I am dreaming while awake because as of now, Embassy Super Club is my official weekend hub. And Celine's as well.

But hey, who says you can't dream? And who says dreams are not meant to come true?

If Miguel and Chat are to be believed, then big dreams can turn real in small packages.

TO INFINITY. Philip Cu-Unjieng by the Canyon pool

MODERN LIVING. At home with Tanya Lara

RANCH DRESSING. Jackie Cohen-Antonio, fresh as ever.

A-LIST OF THE CENTURY. Joey Antonio's new communities

LUX LOUNGING. Celine Lopez and Raul Manzano

BMW'S BEST. Lito German and Leana Farrales

MEGA MILL. Pepper Teehankee and Carla Sibal

21ST CENTURY. Canyon Ranch's Jigger Antonio

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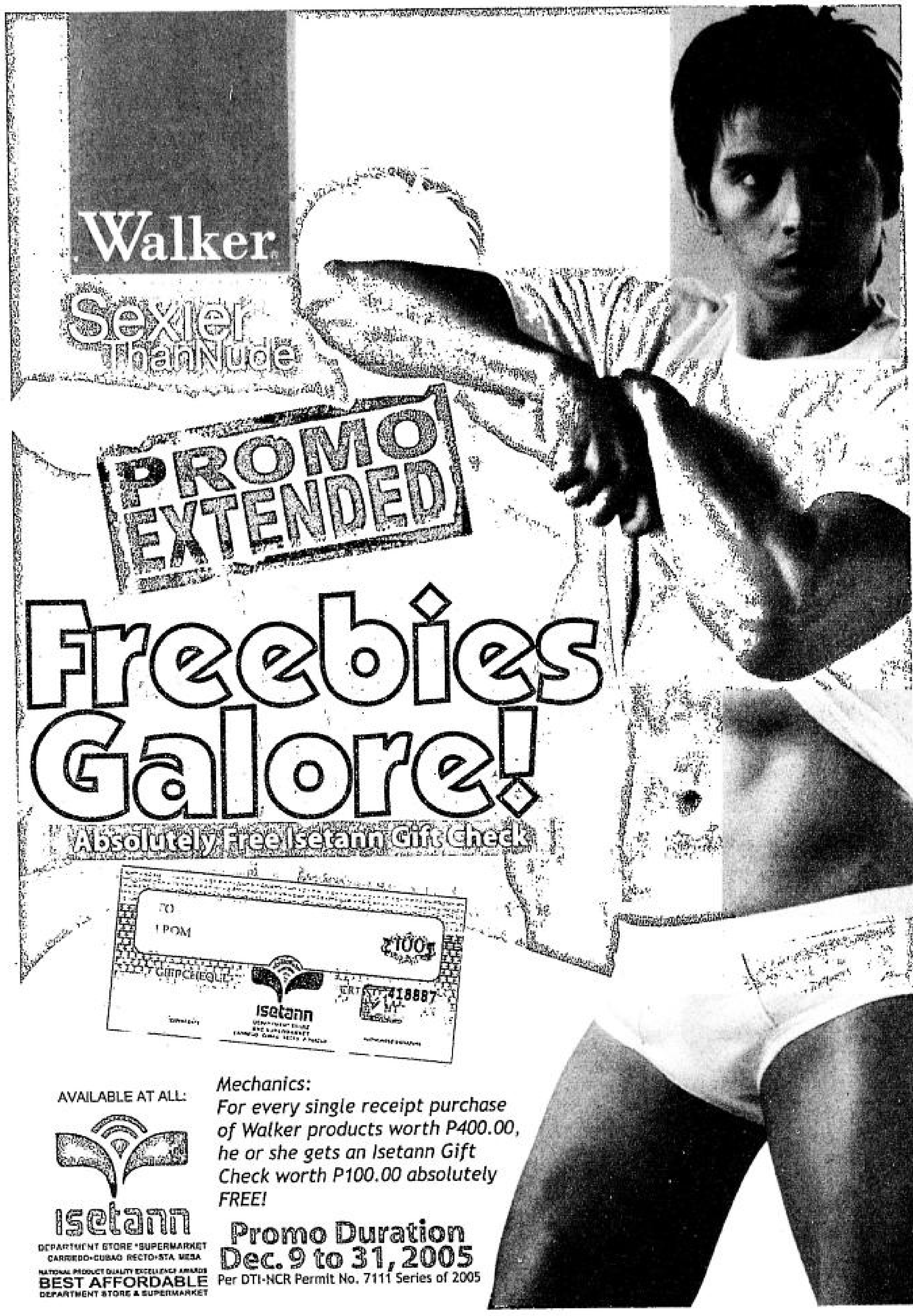

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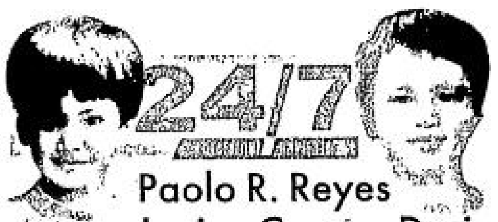
Holiday High



Paolo R. Reyes
Janine Cuenca-Dario

IT'S ONLY EIGHT DAYS TILL CHRISTMAS eve and the party scene has been brimming with all sorts of merrymaking bashes, from NBK's hot holiday house ball last Dec. 3 to the upcoming Yuletide shindigs of Embassy (Dec. 23) and Zen (Dec. 20). Then on the big day itself, all roads lead to Embassy again as DJ James Fierce of Café Mambo Ibiza flies into town. Maybe it's time for you to take a breather from the feverish rush of shopping and be swept by the high of the holidays.

DJ Ben Sowton of Bargrooves London @ Club Vudu Cebu, 9 p.m. tonight

Cebuanos, take note: the renouned creator and resident DJ of Bargrooves London, Ben Sowton, is coming to your side of town tonight at Club Vudu [Crossroads Mall, Cebu City] for a cocktail-fueled night of fun and the most achingly sophisticated deep house. The Superman of Superfly, DJ Karl Ty, and DJ Paolo Maralit of NBK will join him at the decks. Tickets will be available at the gate, or you can email superflymanila@yahoo.com.

Mishka Adams: God Bless the Child Concert @ Music Museum, 7 p.m. tonight

London's Guildhall School of Music awaits the arrival of 21-year old jazz wunderkind Mishka Adams, but before she leaves, the British-Filipina phenomenon will say farewell to her Filipino fans tonight at the Music Museum. Special guests Cynthia Alexander, Mon David, The Blue Echoes, Saxoforo, and Agnes Arellano (Mishka's mom!) will join her onstage. Gates open at 7 p.m. Call 910-9102, 891-9999, or 721-6726.

Panic Extravaganza Party @ Zen, Dec. 20

DJs Alessandra Tinio and Chi Castañeda of Teenage Kick Productions spin another delicious dose of "Panic" in the corridors of Japanese resto-bar, Zen [G/L, Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, Makati, phone: 892-6851] on Tuesday before their two week holiday break. "Aside from being Panic's big Christmas bash, it's going to be a Joe Strummer tribute night—very punk indie and new wave," shares Alessandra, who will also be performing with her roots punk band, The Dorques, along with The Ex Presidents and Betrayed.

Other Super! 24/7 events:

Dec. 17, Saturday

Bacharach Dreams at Premiere THX Cinema; Twentysomething Saturdays at Mezze; Launch Party of Embassy CD by Soundsgood at Embassy; DJs Paolo Abaya & Kimosave at Absinth; Kevin Ruiz at Government

Dec. 18, Sunday

Bloody Mary Sundays at Absinth; Wally Gonzalez at Hard Rock Café; Sugar-free Desserts & Ice Cream at Peninsula Manila Lobby; Acoustic Night at Phi Bar

Dec. 19, Monday

Bamboo at Metro Bar; Soul Seduction at Absinth; I Don't Like Mondays! with DJ Ro at Gweilos Makati; Eastwind Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar

Dec. 20, Tuesday

Kickback Tuesdays at Manila DJ Club; Tropical Depression at Phi Bar; The Bloomfields at Dish; CouchLab DJs at Tiananmen Bar

Dec. 21, Wednesday

Mild Seven's Christmas Ball at Fiamma; Vixen Wednesdays with Superfly & BPM at Embassy Cuisine; Superklasse with Johnyverse & Mars Miranda at Embassy Club; Jazz Festival at Merk's; Eastwind Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar

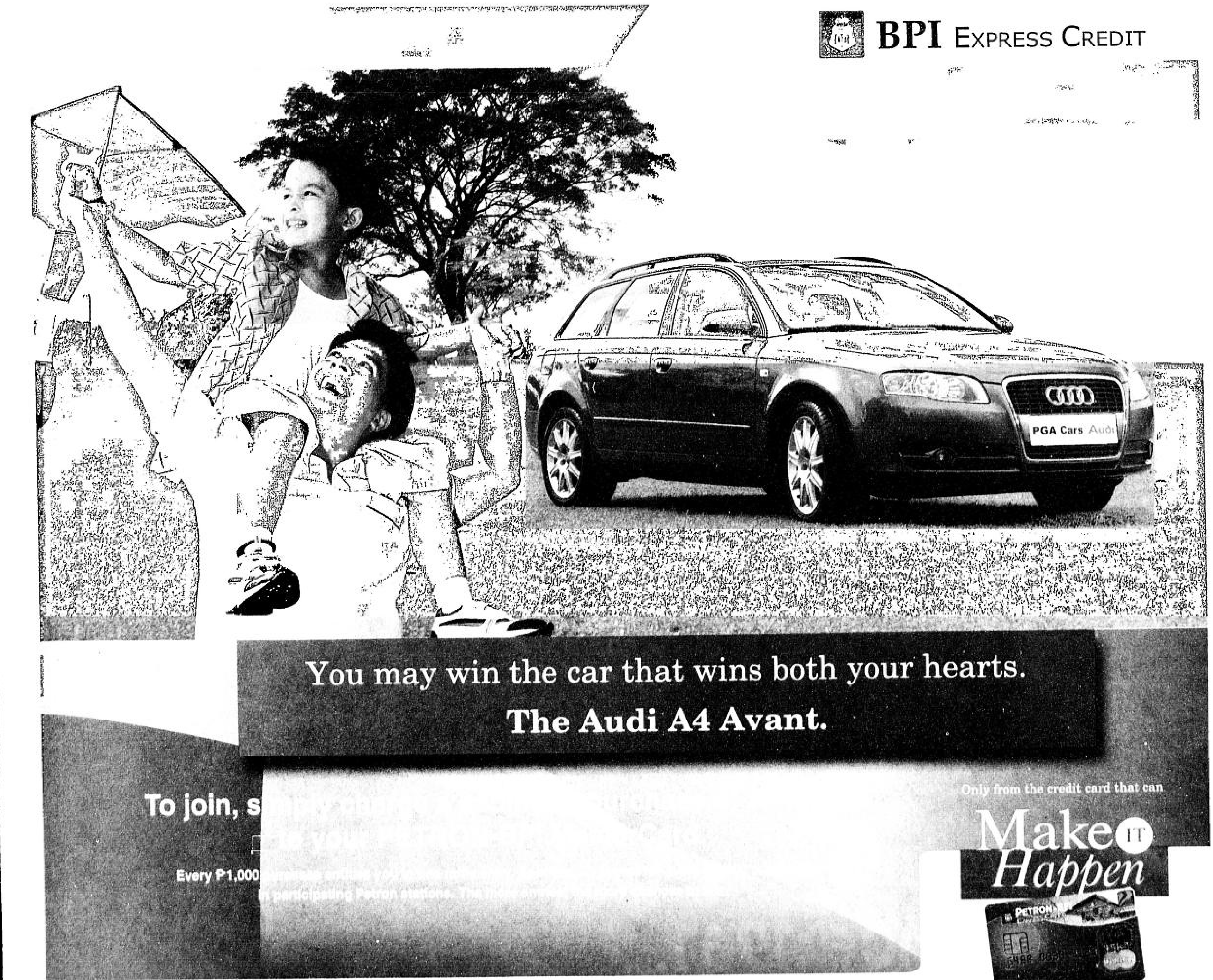
Dec. 22, Thursday

Fluxxe Thursdays at Manila DJ Club; RIDDM: Live Rock with Menaya at Absinth; Supahstar DJ Thursdaze at Bed

Dec. 23, Friday

Juan Pablo Dream, Sino Sikat?, and Cosmic Love at Raff's Parañaque; NBK's HouSessions with Manolet Dario at Mezze; MyHOUSE with Elian Habayeb at M Café; CouchLab DJs at Embassy Cuisine; Fever Fridays with DJ Patch at Absinth; The Jerks at 70s Bistro

Schedules may change without prior notice. For a complete listing of events, text 24/7 and send to 2949 for Globe and 209 for Smart. Log on to www.mag24-7.com or get your free copy of 24/7 Nocturnal Navigator at bars and restaurants around the city. Submit your schedules before Wednesday to events@mag24-7.com and mag24_7@yahoo.com.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